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John E. Emerson.

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JOHN E. EMERSON,

FIRST PASTOR OF THE WHITEFIELD CHURCH,
NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

BY REV. RUFUS W. CLARK,
EAST BOSTON, MASS.

ABRIDGED BY THE AUTHOR.

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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION, ... 5

CHAPTER I.

Infancy and childhood, ... 7

CHAPTER II.

From his professing religion to entering college, . . 40

CHAPTER III.

Residence at Amherst college, ... 62

CHAPTER IV.

Residence at Conway, Mass., ... 97

CHAPTER V.

Connection with Princeton Theological seminary, . . 147

CHAPTER VI.

Settlement over the Whitefield church in Newburyport, 195

CHAPTER VII.

Closing scenes of his life, ... 234

INTRODUCTION.

This memoir has been abridged with the desire of rendering it more acceptable to the general reader, and with the hope that its usefulness may be increased.

Mankind are influenced more by example than precept; a life has more power than a principle. Men, before adopting a truth or system, desire to see its workings upon character, as well as listen to arguments in its favor. It is well, therefore, that a new living testimony to the practical power of Christianity should be perpetuated. Who, comparatively speaking, would have heard of James B. Taylor, Harlan Page, James Brainerd, and others that might be mentioned, had not their memoirs been published to the world? These holy men died in order to live. They, most of them, died young, in order that their influence might possess immortal youth. Their death was the signal that attracted public attention

to their memory, and never at any former period was their influence greater than it is now. While they lived, a few minds were benefited by their example, instructions, and prayers. Now, thousands throughout Christendom feel the hallowed influence of their piety. Multitudes, as they read of the religious exercises, emotions, conflicts, and victories of these heroes in the Christian warfare, have their own faith strengthened, their hopes quickened, and their desires for usefulness kindle with new and fresh ardor. They obtain at their hands weapons, with which to fight the battle of life, with which to contend against the triple forces of "the world, the flesh, and the devil." They learn from them the way of access to the mercy-seat; learn the value of the diligent study of God's word; learn the benefits of religious meditation, and thorough self-examination; learn, what we most need to know, how to die—how to leave these familiar scenes with composure, and enter upon the mysterious future life with "songs and everlasting joy."

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MEMOIR

OF

REV. JOHN E. EMERSON

CHAPTER I.

INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD.

1823—1836.

John Edwards Emerson was born in Newburyport, Mass., September 27, 1823. He was the son of Mr. Charles L. and Mrs. Rhoda P. Emerson, and grandson of the Rev. John Emerson, who for more than fifty years was an able and devoted minister of the gospel in Conway, Mass. The ancestry of Mr. Emerson is distinguished for a large number of faithful ministers. Joseph Emerson, who came from England, was a clergyman in Mendon, Mass.,

and removed to Concord, where he died in 1680. His grandson, Joseph Emerson, was settled in Malden in 1721, and died in 1767, aged 67. Three of his sons were ministers: Joseph of Pepperell, William of Concord, and John of Conway.

The subject of this memoir, at a very early age, manifested a high degree of conscientiousness. His pious parents and friends treasure in their memory many striking and pleasing incidents illustrative of his sensitiveness under the least deviation from rectitude and truth. Whenever he did any thing that he thought was wrong, he could not rest until he had hastened to his parents and obtained their forgiveness.

One day, having read in his Bible the passage, "Confess your faults one to another," he went to his mother, and with much feeling referred to what he had been reading, and said that he had taken something from the closet without permission, and wished to confess the wrong as the Holy Bible required.

Every Sabbath noon the children were accustomed to repeat the ten commandments, and

after each one they were asked whether during the preceding week they had been guilty of its violation; a plan eminently calculated to implant right principles in their young hearts. One evening after the eighth commandment had been repeated, John remarked that the day before, he had picked up a cent in an adjoining yard; and thinking that it might belong to one of the neighbors, he did not feel it to be right to retain it, and proposed to take it to them the next day, and very cheerfully did so. This hour on the Sabbath, between one and two o'clock, was peculiarly precious to John through life. It was at this time especially that his mother sought to make deep religious impressions upon the minds of her children, and lead them to repent of the sins they had committed during the previous week. Even when John was absent from home, he would spend the hour in prayer and meditation.

When very young, he was in the habit of praying in secret; and from the commencement, his prayers made with his mother or other associates were remarkable for their appropriateness and fervency.

Among his childish propensities was a fondness for imitating the preacher, and going through with the services of public worship. He would even carry the matter so far as to appear to exchange pulpits with the neighboring ministers; and so perfectly did he imitate the voice, manner, and gestures of each, that it was at once apparent with whom he was exchanging.

This disposition of his mind to imitate, which, however, seldom degenerated into mimicry, he early restrained; and from a child was remarkable for his profound reverence for every thing pertaining to religion.

He was always more or less thoughtful and serious; but on the last Sabbath in December, 1833, he passed through a crisis in his feelings that decided his religious character for this life, and his hopes for eternity. The previous Saturday evening a more than usual seriousness was apparent in his countenance and deportment. The Spirit of God was evidently striving with him, and he felt that he must make a full and entire consecration of himself to Christ.

On Sabbath morning he came home from church bathed in tears. He asked his mother to accompany him up stairs, saying that he was a great sinner. She urged him to go to God with his desires and troubles. Referring to his meditations, he said, "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." He then fell upon his knees, and poured out his soul in supplication before God. His mother stood near, perfectly astonished at his fervency, and the appropriateness, beauty, and force of his language. He prayed as one who had long had access to the mercy-seat—one who was acquainted with the workings and treachery of the human heart, and who felt his entire dependence upon God for strength and hope. After dinner he communicated his feelings more fully to both his parents; and they, with parental affection and Christian earnestness, directed him to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Again they had a season of prayer together, and the spirit of the young disciple was comforted and refreshed.

A few days after this, an inquiry-meeting

was appointed to be held in the church at the close of a public religious service. All who desired to converse with the minister on the subject of their salvation were invited to remain. John accepted the invitation and tarried. While sitting in his seat, he observed some boys in the gallery pointing at him and laughing. The blood rushed to his cheeks, and feeling keenly the ridicule, he took his hat in his hand to leave the house; but just as he was rising to go, these lines flashed into his mind:

> "Ashamed of Jesus, that dear friend,
> On whom my hopes of heaven depend!"

In an instant he was ready to reply,

> "No; when I blush, be this my shame—
> That I no more revere his name."

Immediately he resumed his seat, laid aside his hat, and resolved that, God helping him, he would strive, in spite of every obstacle, to obtain salvation.

In conversation with the minister, he stated his views and wishes, and was urged to exercise sincere repentance for sin, and rely solely

upon the merits and sufferings of Christ for pardon and acceptance.

A pious friend residing in the family relates the following touching incident:

"In February, 1834, when John slept in the trundle-bed in my room, very early in the morning I heard him weeping, and caught now and then a whisper; at first I took no notice of it. He continued weeping for some time; I then said, 'John, what is the matter?' He did not answer me, but wept more bitterly. I went to him and said, 'What ails you, John; are you sick?' He then with great sobbing said, 'I am such a great sinner, I am afraid God will not forgive my sins.' I said a little to him about Christ. His heart seemed to be broken, and his face was wet with tears. I told him he might go into aunt L——'s room, and she would talk with him. He went, and found her engaged, so that she could say but little to him. He then came to me and said, 'No one cares about my soul.' I told him to go to his room, and tell the Saviour all about it; he would care for him. He went and staid until breakfast was ready, when he came to the table, ate but little,

and appeared very solemn, and seemed in a very subdued state."

In March, being then ten years old, he wrote to his brother William the following letter, giving an account of his feelings and hopeful conversion.

"NEWBURYPORT, March 22, 1834.

"DEAR BROTHER—I have long wanted to write, to tell you my feelings. The last time that you were at home from Andover, on Saturday evening, a dark and stormy night, mother was conversing with us on the subject of religion. She said that probably a great many persons before the next Saturday night would be sealed for heaven or hell. Those words made a deep impression upon my mind, and I hope will never be effaced. The next day I felt very much what a sinner I was. I read the second chapter of Proverbs, which gave some comfort to my mind: I hope that you will read it.

"I kept on with my hope in Christ, till one Sabbath morning I received such light, peace, and comfort, that I came down from my chamber and asked mother to go up with me. She did so, and we read and prayed, and had a

most delightful season. I went to the Sabbath-school afterwards, and communicated my feelings to my teacher: he was delighted. I then went to meeting, and heard a sermon from this text, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' It was just what I wanted. I went home rejoicing in my Saviour.

"After the meeting in the afternoon an inquiry-meeting was appointed, and a great many persons stopped. I was one of them. Dr. Skinner addressed us, and showed us our duty, that Christ requires us to deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow him.

"For the last two or three days I have had light and comfort poured into my soul. I feel as though I could trust in the Lord at all times. O, William, I do earnestly hope that you and Charles will be brought to see the error of your ways, and now 'turn unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon you, and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.' I do hope that your feet will be taken out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and planted upon the rock Christ Jesus. I know how many temptations and snares you are exposed to, but you must pray

to God to keep you from them, and from the great adversary of souls.

"I have a chamber where, morning, noon, and evening, I retire to read the Scriptures, pray, and meditate, and sometimes sing. I have many a time had sweet communion with God, and many a time have had to weep and mourn over my folly and sins. But I trust that I shall not have to mourn much more, for I hope to live very near to God. We have no minister yet at our church; but we have meetings almost all the time, and I attend them, and find them a great deal more interesting than I did before I felt as I do now on the subject of religion. The Sabbath is more precious to me now, and I can treasure up a great deal more of the sermon than I used to. Sometimes I feel as if I could see God right before me while I am praying; but I find that when I sin, I do not get such nearness to him.

"Mother, Samuel, and I, have an hour every Sunday between the ringing of the bells in the afternoon, and we have very pleasant seasons together. Samuel, we hope, is thinking on the subject of religion. He has attended a great

many of the meetings. He told mother to-day, that what made him want to pray was this sentence: 'Praying will make us leave off sinning, and sinning will make us leave off praying.' He wants you to learn it. He prays for you every day most sincerely, and I hope his prayers for you will be answered.

"We have now a great revival in this town; many souls have been converted.

"I hope you will write me a very long letter in return for this, and I hope to hear that you have turned to God. Pray for me, and the Lord be with you and bless you for ever and ever.

"Your affectionate brother,

"J. E. EMERSON."

In such simple and pious language did our little convert relate what the Lord had done for his soul. His allusions to his seasons of prayer are peculiarly touching, and indeed, prayer was his meat and drink.

On one occasion he was praying aloud as was his custom, and a friend in an adjoining room overheard him. After listening for a few moments, she was so affected by his earnestness and childlike confidence in God, that she

burst into tears. Such a prayer she never heard before from infant lips.

When he felt the burden of sin, or had any thing upon his mind that troubled him, he went to the throne of grace, and there obtained relief and comfort. This privilege was not a mere form, but a blessed reality. He felt that there was power and efficacy in prayer; and he loved to bend the knee before his heavenly Father, and abide in the light of his divine countenance. He had each day three seasons of prayer, and as he entered his little sanctuary he would repeat the following lines:

"By morning light I 'll seek his face,
At noon repeat my cry;
The night shall hear me ask his grace,
Nor will he long deny."

After he commenced attending school, he would hasten home to his quiet retreat, and enjoy a little season of communion with God.

Feeling a strong desire to be useful to others, he voluntarily established a prayer-meeting among his school-mates; and he led their devotions with all the propriety and solemnity of one who had enjoyed a long Christian experi-

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ence. Often, too, he might be seen earnestly conversing with them upon the importance of loving God, obeying their parents, speaking the truth, and avoiding every sin.

His interest in the public services of the sanctuary was manifested at a very early age. He loved to go with his parents to the house of God; and his remarks upon the sermon and other exercises on returning home, showed that he had listened with attention, and with unusual discrimination for one of his years.

The views he entertained of ministerial excellence were high; and he took great delight in the society of ministers. When listening to their conversation or prayers, and especially when they conversed with him, he seemed to be perfectly happy.

The Sabbath was a very precious day to John. Its morning light he hailed with gratitude and pleasure. Early might his voice be heard ascending to his Father in heaven, for the divine blessing upon his own soul, upon his parents, and upon the exercises of the day. Its hours were never wearisome, its duties never irksome, even to his youthful spirit.

There seemed, indeed, every day to be a Sabbath abiding in his soul, with its peaceful hallowed influences; and the privileges and sacred associations of the day appeared to be more congenial to his feelings, than the employments of the week.

We would by no means present the character of this youth as faultless. We would use no false colorings in delineating his traits and virtues. We simply give the impressions that we have received from many witnesses. All testify to his purity, loveliness of disposition, and tender regard for sacred things.

His fondness for reading was manifested at an early age. The books that specially interested him, were the lives of persons eminent for their piety. The memoir of Nathan Dickerman, of Mary Lothrop, of Harriet Newell, and works of a similar character, he read over and over again. He longed to be imbued with their devotional spirit, and to mould his character after the patterns here presented.

The Bible, however, was John's greatest treasure. He did not simply read it. He studied it. He prayed over it. He could say,

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." He stored his memory with its most precious and forcible passages; and this enabled him during his life to make on all occasions appropriate and striking quotations from the Scriptures. He often appeared to think in Bible language, and mould his ideas in Bible imagery. The beautiful figures scattered throughout the Psalms of David, the sublime language of the prophets, the simple instructions of the Saviour, delighted his youthful imagination. He was particularly fond of the Proverbs of Solomon; and the second chapter he was in the habit of calling his chapter, as he had read it over, I think I may say hundreds of times. He referred to this chapter on his death-bed, and remarked that it had always been his guide. The words of the wise man seemed ever to ring in his ear, "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

When Mr. Emerson was between ten and

twelve years of age, he read entirely through Scott's Bible, with the notes and practical remarks. It was his custom to read a chapter or two each day aloud, with the notes. Thus he furnished his mind with a fund of biblical knowledge that he found of great service in after-life. He also acquired by this exercise no small degree of mental discipline, and cultivated a taste for the study of other and more critical commentaries upon the Scriptures. The completion of this undertaking within so short a period, is proof of the energy as well as the devotional character of his mind. But few at his age would have manifested such perseverance, or have devoted so much time to such an exercise. While other lads were engaged in their sports, he was in his little sanctuary bending over the sacred volume, and preparing, though unconsciously, for an early summons to the temple above.

His parents, besides doing all in their power to develope and strengthen these religious tendencies, were also careful to shield their son from the evil influence of improper companions. For such society John, too, had a positive aver-

sion. The wicked language and censurable conduct of such boys sent a chill through his heart, and he avoided them as much as possible. In so doing, he certainly acted most wisely; for of all the pernicious influences to which children are exposed, I know of none more destructive than that which flows from bad associates. In vast multitudes of instances the faithful instructions of parents, the warnings of friends, the good effects of early religious culture, are lost in this vortex of iniquity. While the Christian parent at home is doing all in his power to promote the growth of right principles and fortify the mind against the power of temptation, the child is often learning that abroad which will blast and scathe his character, and eventually defeat all the efforts that are made to train him to habits of virtue and holiness. Many of the young who, on leaving home for our large cities, fall victims to dissipation, carry with them the seeds of vice sown by the hand of improper associates. While they remain under the parental roof, they are subject to restraints that prevent these secret sins from ripening into open trans-

gression. But these restraints removed, and the youth left free to act for himself, then the poison begins to work—then its ruinous effects are experienced; and in the contest between the hallowed influences of home and these awakened evil tendencies of the heart, the youth is fortunate if he escapes absolute destruction.

This, however, is not the place to discuss so grave and important a subject; yet we cannot but remark that Mr. Emerson was greatly indebted for his purity of mind, integrity of character, and strict conscientiousness, to his freedom from these baneful influences. He uniformly sought the society of the good, the virtuous, and the wise. He delighted in the company of those older than himself, and was fond of mingling with those visitors who were eminent for their piety and were ready to converse on religious subjects. The fair little boy, with his intelligent blue eye, his thoughtful brow, his pensive countenance, his respectful demeanor, might be seen often sitting for hours, and drinking in the words that fell from those who spoke of Christ and conversed upon the

doctrines and blessings of true religion. Under such influences was he nurtured, and by such means was he protected from the evils of pernicious companions.

When between ten and eleven years of age, John was prostrated by sickness. His diligence in his studies, and constant attendance upon religious meetings, exhausted his strength and weakened his constitution, which was naturally feeble. His religious impressions at this time were becoming very deep; and the glow of a heavenly fervor was pervading more fully his soul. He knew not but he should die; yet his spirit was full of rapturous delight. He felt that he could rely upon God, that Jesus was his friend, that heaven was his home. Much of his time was spent in fervent prayer, and in listening to the reading of the Bible and other religious books. Several hymns which he had committed to memory, he repeated often, and with much apparent emotion. The following beautiful stanzas of the hymn commencing, "Ye angels who stand round the throne," afforded him very great delight.

"Oh, when will the period appear,
When I shall unite in your song?
I 'm weary of lingering here,
And I to your Saviour belong.
I 'm fettered and chained up in clay;
I struggle and pant to be free;
I long to be soaring away,
My God and my Saviour to see.

"I want to put on my attire,
Washed white in the blood of the Lamb;
I want to be one of your choir,
And tune my sweet harp to his name—
I want—Oh, I want to be there,
Where sorrow and sin bid adieu—
Your joy and your friendship to share,
To wonder and worship with you."

The last stanza he repeated with deep emotion.

On recovering his health, he felt more than ever the importance of making an entire consecration of himself to Christ. His feelings at this time are expressed in the following letter, which he wrote to his friend, Mr. S. N. Tenny of Boston, July 5, 1834:

"Dear Sir—Your kind letter of June 12, I received and read with much pleasure. You were certainly very kind to take such an in-

terest in me, as to write such a long letter. You say that you hope my health is improving. I can with pleasure assure you that it has entirely recovered, and I can truly say, 'What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?' I hope that I shall remember his goodness with gratitude, and live nearer to him than I did before. I hope that you will pray for me, that I may have that tenderness of conscience and humble heart that you spoke of in your letter.

"Our little praying circle of boys still continues to meet, and nearly all feel interested in the great and important subject of religion. This afternoon we had a meeting, and though there were but three present, we yet had a good time; for the Lord has promised that where two or three are met together in his name, he will be in the midst of them. Oh, Mr. Tenny, do pray for us that we may continue steadfast—that we may not go back to the beggarly elements of this sinful world, but be enabled to 'press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' What an awful thing it would be, after seek-

ing Christ, to turn back again to sin and folly and unbelief. Do pray *for me*, also, that I may not be left to go back to the world, and that I may be kept from the great adversary of souls. Please to pray also for my dear young companions, who, I fear, have no interest in Christ, that they may be brought to love the Saviour, and repent before it is for ever too late. Remember especially those who have no dear parents to pray for them as I have.

"I hope that the dear children under your care in the Sabbath-school will profit much by your instructions, and that you will have the pleasure, if God spares your life, of seeing them grow up and doing good for Christ. I will try to remember them and you in my prayers. . . . .

"Your affectionate young friend,

"J. E. E."

At this time John commenced keeping a journal, thinking that by daily recording his feelings he might better watch over his heart and life. The following are selections from the first few pages:

"SABBATH-DAY, JULY 13, 1834. I have re-

solved to write a little in this book, as often as I can, respecting my feelings. For two or three days past I have been in a pleasant frame of mind. I have felt more like obeying my parents, conforming to the wishes of my friends—more like serving God, and praying, and reading the Bible and good books. The sermons I heard to-day were very excellent, and I trust that they will do me good.

"MONDAY. I make it a practice to perform my closet duties at some stated time; at seven o'clock in the morning, twelve at noon, and seven at night. As the length of the days alters, I alter the times for prayer.

"SABBATH-DAY, AUGUST 17. This has been to me a blessed day. I think that I have felt the preciousness of heaven more than I ever did before. Oh, the bliss of that bright world where saints and angels dwell! My heavenly Father has permitted me to go up to his house twice to-day, and listen to two sermons, which I trust will be blessed to me, and to all others.

"MONDAY. My feelings to-day are not as they were yesterday; yet I hope that I may have more of those feelings. As I grow in

years, I hope to grow more and more in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour, and to love and serve God better than I have in years past.

"WEDNESDAY. Oh, that I had more of the spirit of Jesus—that mild and forgiving spirit that he constantly exercised. I feel that I am a great sinner; I offend the very God who made us, and who is so good to all his creatures.

"FRIDAY. I have taken an earlier time for my closet duties this morning. I will try and see if I cannot follow in my blessed Master's steps; for he arose before daylight, and agonized in prayer.

"SATURDAY, AUGUST 23. The blessed Sabbath is drawing near. Delightful day. May I be prepared for its duties, and enjoy its sacred privileges. What have I done the past week? Oh, I fall far, far short of my duty. Oh, may I wake up, and realize where I am, and what I am doing, and whom I am serving."

"MARCH 16, 1835. It is a long time since I have written in my journal, but I now feel in the right frame of mind to write, and tell of the love of Jesus, which is burning in my soul.

During the past winter, I have not felt as Christ requires his followers to feel. I have been indifferent and cold in religion. My heart has been like the rivers and lakes, bound up with impenetrable ice. But now that spring has come, and the sun shines brightly, I trust that my spirit will be warmed, and I hope that every changing season will find me more engaged in loving and serving God.

"SABBATH, MARCH 29. Through the abundant goodness of God, we are permitted to see another Sabbath. But what have we done for God the past week? I think that I have had more than usual delight in prayer and in reading the Scriptures. My sins continue to trouble me, but I pray to God for forgiveness, and for strength to resist temptation. Have been reading that beautiful Psalm, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' Oh, that it might make a deeper impression on my mind; that I might indeed lie down in green pastures, and beside the still waters of salvation.

"THURSDAY, APRIL, 1835. This is Fast-day, appointed by the state as a day in which to repent of sin and humble ourselves before God.

How have we improved it? I fear that many have been neglecting the day, and playing, rather than confessing their sins. 'Behold,' says God, 'ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Is it such a fast that I have chosen—a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Is not this the fast that I have chosen; to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry?' Now, have we obeyed these injunctions? Has this fast been an acceptable one to the Lord? I fear that too many of us have failed to examine our hearts, failed to repent of sin, and pray as we ought for God's blessing upon our guilty nation.

"Sabbath, April 12. Through the tender mercies of God we have been permitted again to go up to his house, and some of his children have had the privilege of sitting around the communion-table, and commemorating the dying love of Christ. Oh that I may soon be one

of their number, and enjoy the rich benefits of meeting my Saviour at his own table. I long for sanctification, for a vital union to Christ.

"I also feel anxious to be useful, to do something for the honor of my Master, to labor in his vineyard, and to live more entirely for his glory than I have ever done before.

Under date of April 9, 1835, he wrote to his friend Mr. T—— of Boston:

"DEAR SIR— Your letter, dated Feb. 17, I received, and was very much gratified that you had not forgotten me. At your request, I will try to give you some account of my feelings the past winter. I do not think I have felt as much engaged in the subject of religion as I did a year ago. But for a week or two past, I have had my feelings somewhat revived. I have felt more like loving God, more like praying, and more like serving him, than I have ever before. I have had, along back, many fears of death. I feared I was such a sinner that God would not accept me; but now I feel these doubts in a measure removed. I hope you will pray for me, that I may hate every

sin, and grow in every Christian grace; that I may have strength to speak to my young companions on the subject of religion, and set before them a good example. I have hitherto had too many fears about speaking to them on this all-important subject. I fear that most or all of those of my young companions who met to pray when you were here, have gone back again to the world. They do not appear to wish to say any thing upon the subject. I hope you will pray for me, that I may be kept from denying Christ, or following a multitude to do evil.

"I was glad to hear that so many of your Sabbath scholars have an interest in the Saviour. I hope they may be enabled to keep on in the Christian course; and may they, and I, and all children, be at last found on the right hand of God. I am glad that you have had such joyful news about your little brother. I hope that he may grow up to be a minister of the gospel, and be the means, under God, of saving many souls. My health, which was poor when I was in Boston, has been very good this winter. I have been able to attend school and meetings most of the time. We have no minister yet,

but have had some excellent preaching. I lately heard a sermon on justification by faith, which I liked very much. Pray for us.

"Yours, with affection,

"J. E. E."

When John had reached the age of twelve years, he thought it was his duty to make a public profession of his faith in Christ. He heard one Sabbath a discourse upon this subject, which made a deep impression upon his mind. He felt that the command of the Saviour, "This do, in remembrance of me," was addressed to him, and that he must obey it. Accordingly, he sought the advice of his Christian friends, and made the matter a subject of frequent and fervent prayer. His friends, thinking that he was too young to make a public profession, did not encourage it. They advised him to wait until he was older, and had acquired more experience in the Christian life. But he thought otherwise. Though modest and retiring in his disposition, and inclined to pay great deference to the opinions of his parents, and Sabbath-school teacher, and others, yet he was impressed that it was his duty to

acknowledge Christ before men; and trusting in God, he resolved to present himself as a candidate for admission to the church.

In an interview that he had with his pastor, the Rev. Mr. Stearns, the following statement and inquiry was presented to him: "John, you have occasion to thank God that almost all your near friends are Christians; they have longed to see you one, and nothing could delight them more than to learn that you have determined to follow Christ. But suppose the case reversed: suppose your friends were all enemies of religion, and even your father and mother were disposed to deride you for becoming a Christian, do you think you would still adhere to the same determination?" He hung his head, and remained silent. It was very evident that a conflict was going on in his young bosom, for the probe had been inserted just where his heart was most sensitive. At length he said, timidly, "I don't know; I think Christ would keep me." "Yes, he would keep you," was the reply, "and he will keep you in all trials, if you continue to trust in him."

Soon after this interview, an afternoon was

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appointed for the examination of candidates for admission to the church. When the time arrived, a little boy dressed in a short brown jacket with a white collar turned over it, might be seen wending his way alone to the vestry of the Federal-street church. With a modest yet firm step he goes from his little sanctuary, where he has sought divine direction and strength, to be examined for admission to the church of Christ. Though no friend is with him, angel messengers from the courts above attend him. The great Shepherd, who gently carries the lambs in his bosom, watches over him. The omniscient Being, who knows how short will be his career here, directs his footsteps, and inclines him thus early to seek a union with his visible church.

Reaching the room, the fair youth enters and takes his seat. A slight indication of embarrassment appears in his countenance; but the cloud soon passes away. The officers of the church look upon the lad with some misgivings. But on listening to his account of his religious experience and hopes, their doubts quickly vanish. While they wish to act with

discretion, they cannot take the responsibility of refusing the young applicant admission to Christ's fold. Accordingly, it was decided to receive him, and on the Friday evening following, February 12, 1836, he made a public profession of his faith in Christ; and on the following Sabbath, being then twelve years old, partook for the first time of the emblems of the Saviour's broken body and shed blood. At the same age at which his Master was found "in the temple, in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions," this young disciple was found entering his service and putting on the armor for the great battle of life. This Sabbath was a precious one to our young Christian. He thus refers to it in a letter written a few days afterwards:

"That Sabbath was a delightful day to my soul. I feel as if God was very near to me. After the benediction was pronounced, and I remained in the pew to commune with the people of God, I could say from the heart,

"'Why was I made to hear thy voice
And enter while there 's room,
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?

"'T was the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin.'"

John now felt that he had obtained that peace "which passeth all understanding." His spirit was at rest. He had long looked forward to the time when he should be received into the fold of Christ, and his interests be identified with those of the Redeemer's kingdom. In his letters written at this period, he refers to the duties and privileges connected with his church-membership. "Now," he says, "when the church-meeting is mentioned, I feel that I can go with the people of God and unite my prayers with theirs for the prosperity of Zion." Yes, child of the covenant, heir of the promises; and God only knows, eternity only can reveal, the power and blessed effects of those prayers.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS PROFESSING RELIGION TO HIS ENTERING COLLEGE.

1836—1840.

Mr. Emerson had now buckled on his armor for the Christian warfare, and his extreme youth, the gentleness of his spirit, and the trials peculiar to one in his circumstances, render his career from this point one of peculiar interest. His conversion bore the most decisive marks of being genuine and thorough. His heart was sincere, his motives pure, and his faith strong. He had before him a high standard of piety, which he daily struggled to reach. He longed for holiness. He could say, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

His desires for usefulness were intense. He labored and prayed for the salvation of his relatives and companions as one who realized the

infinite value of the soul. In going to and from school, he availed himself of opportunities to converse with others upon religious subjects. His life, also, was a constant recommendation of the value and excellence of the Christian religion. So perfectly consistent was his deportment, so kind was he to all, and so free from a vindictive or revengeful spirit, that his school-mates often remarked, although they had little confidence in the pretensions of many others, they "had no doubt that John Emerson was a Christian."

But our young hero had his trials, and severe ones too. He was constantly exposed to the ridicule and opposition of thoughtless and vicious boys; and the bitterness of such assaults, to a tender and sensitive spirit, can only be fully known by experience. In mature age, the ability to endure such opposition increases to such an extent as to enable one to regard with indifference many sources of irritation and pain. Then the character is formed, the habits fixed, and the purposes have acquired a steadfastness which is not easily shaken. But here is a lad just entering upon life. His character

is in the process of formation. His faculties are just opening, under the influences of mental and moral culture. His position is peculiar. He sits at his desk in the school-room, stands in the recitation class, and appears upon the play-ground, the only professor of religion in the group. His words, his conduct, his spirit, are watched more narrowly than those of an adult Christian. Even his intimate and beloved associates, in their thoughtless gayety, find it difficult to restrain their boyish jests at the expense of his Christian profession. Yet the youthful warrior bears it all calmly, patiently. Though his sufferings were often keen, and his heart was ready to burst with inward grief—though the tear of intense emotion would start in his eye, yet he would guard his tongue, and suppress, as far as possible, his feelings. Hurrying from school, he sought his chamber, and there poured out his complaints and supplications before God. Here his feelings were soothed, his armor was brightened, and his arm nerved for renewed conflicts.

In a letter to a friend, he thus alludes to this subject:

"Now, dear sir, I will tell you a little about my trials. Trials? I should rather say, joys; for they strengthen me in the Christian course. They make my belief in God's word stronger; for you know it says, 'If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also.' My companions do deride me, but I try to look to God for direction and strength. I desire myself to do good to their souls. I feel as though I had a great work to do, and I want to be about it. I have been reading lately the life of Harlan Page. Oh, how much good he did. I think that the Saviour has called me into his vineyard to labor, and my question now is, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' Pray, my dear friend, for me, that I may not be an unprofitable servant. Pray also that my young companions may be brought into Christ's fold, and that God's Spirit may be poured down, and the whole town become converted.

"One of the boys in the class with me in the Sabbath-school, came to me the other night, and said that what the teacher had said to him had not been lost upon him. He felt that he was a sinner, and must repent and believe in

Christ. I was rejoiced to hear him say so. I tried to direct him to the Saviour, and urged him not to grieve away the Holy Spirit. I hope that he will thus early be brought into the fold. Do pray for him, and for all my young companions."

On one occasion, some rude boys stopped John in the street, and pressing him into a corner, declared that he should not go home until he had prayed in their presence. This rudeness he bore with Christian fortitude, although he felt it keenly. Had he followed the promptings of the natural heart, he would have resented it. But rather than retaliate an injury, he was ready to confer a favor upon those who had wronged him. He obeyed literally the command, "Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

Several times he was ridiculed for going to the communion, and was asked very irreverent questions respecting the bread and wine.

Here the writer must take occasion to re-

mark, that of all sins, there are few in his view more heinous, than that of making sport of a person's religious feelings, and endeavoring to impede or destroy the spiritual growth of a young convert. To hinder a soul that is struggling to escape the snares of the adversary, that is striving to overcome its depraved inclinations, that is earnestly seeking the light of God's truth, and is anxious to avoid the retribution of despair, is one of the darkest sins. The difficulties, the doubts, the harassing fears that at best beset the young disciple, are enough without the sneers of ungodly companions. If any in our highly favored communities are by their waywardness, scepticism, or profligacy, bent upon the ruin of their own souls, I pray God that they may not be so destitute of all moral sensibility, so lost to the dictates of a common humanity, as to labor to drag others with them to perdition.

Had not our young hero received a large measure of divine grace, had not the shield of his heavenly Father been over him, and holy angels encamped round about him, he could

not, at so tender an age and with so little experience, have withstood their persecution. But his fortitude never failed him, his Christian patience never forsook him. After passing one day through a very trying scene, he simply, on reaching home, made this mild remark, "I do not think that men would treat each other so, for they have more politeness than boys."

Some of John's school-mates sympathized with him in these trials. One, a lad older than himself, addressed to him the following note on the subject:

"DEAR FRIEND—The insulting language which your class-mates use towards you, it is probable will soon cease; I mean, that I will do all in my power to prevent it. With J——, who is a vile fellow, I can have no influence. Where I can assist you, I will. Bear it as well as you possibly can, and endeavor not to regard it at all. If they think it vexes you, they will continue it longer. Be of good courage. Although I do not think it wise for one so young to join the church, that is, for my own part, yet when I can restrain the abuse

heaped upon you, I will with pleasure. For surely in this free country each should be allowed to worship God as he pleases, and even monarchs cannot repress the thoughts of their subjects.

"Yours, etc.,

"W. F. T.

"MONDAY MORNING, February, 1836."

To this John sent, the next day, the following reply:

"MY DEAR FRIEND—Your kind letter I received, and read alone, as you requested. I thank you for the kindness shown to me. I do not intend to mind what they say at all. I think they will soon get over it. My motive for joining the church was this. Perhaps you know that I have been thinking on the subject of religion for some time past; and I thought it was my duty, if I was a Christian, to do all the Saviour commanded; and this was one of his commands, 'This do, in remembrance of me.' I thought that it was my duty to obey it, and now you see how they revile me for it. But I will look to God for strength. I think

it was very kind in you to feel for me, and my prayer for you is, that you may soon be brought into Christ's fold and be the means of doing much good.

"Yours, in sincerity,

"JOHN E. EMERSON."

Mr. Emerson was prepared for college in the excellent classical High-school of his native town. Here he made very commendable proficiency in Latin and Greek, and in other studies. Having in view, from his childhood, the gospel ministry, he prosecuted his studies with great diligence, being anxious to be thoroughly qualified for his great work. His teachers testify to his diligence, obedience, and strictly consistent conduct during his connection with the school.

While prosecuting his studies with diligence, John was also punctual in his attendance upon religious meetings. On the occasion of the annual church fast, he attended a meeting at which it was the custom for the church-members to pray in the order in which they sat. He had never been called upon to pray in public, and he was greatly perplexed to know what

he ought to do. His modesty inclined him to retain his seat and not attempt to lead the devotions of the assembly, and yet he did not wish to shrink from his duty in the case. As his turn to pray was drawing near, and he was revolving what he should do, he suddenly thought of the children of Israel, as they were about to pass the river Jordan on entering the promised land. He remembered that the waters did not divide until their feet touched the edge of the stream; and he felt confident that the same God who opened a passage for them, after they had moved forward in obedience to his command, would give him strength at the moment when the duty should devolve upon him. Nor was his confidence misplaced. He arose and offered a simple, fervent prayer, which was listened to with breathless attention. It was evident to all that this was no unusual exercise to him. He pleaded as one who had influence at the throne of grace, one who had faith in the efficacy of prayer.

His time was so much occupied that he could not write with much regularity in his journal. We make the following extracts:

"Sabbath, May 8. I have been thinking this morning, what I could do for the advancement of Christ's cause in the world; and one way in which I thought that I might be useful was by setting a holy example, by not countenancing any sin, and by appearing cheerful without being too light or gay. I will make a beginning to-day, and will go to God for strength, and will ask his blessing upon the effort.

"Tuesday. Tried to talk with my playmate J. S——, and to lead him to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. I hope he is a child of God. Have written a letter to-day to W. and J. P——, who belong to our Sabbath-school class, and who expect to leave town soon. I hope that they may get good from it.

"Saturday. Have been reading to-day the life of Harlan Page. What a pious, devoted man he was. O that I might be as useful, that I might do something to advance the kingdom of Christ.

"Friday, May 27, 1836. Through the goodness of my heavenly Father, I am brought here

again, after an absence of a week. My mind, while I have been gone, has been too much taken up with the vanities of the world, and I fear my prayers have been too cold and too short. The objects that I have seen have distracted my attention and led me away from heavenly things. May God forgive me, and may I live henceforth more to his glory.

"SATURDAY, JUNE 4. I feel as if I could say in sincerity,

'Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers.'

"I long to have my heart warmed—long to be quickened in the divine life. I am too liable to wander and grow cold, and forget the great work to which my God calls me."

At the beginning of the year 1838, Mr. Emerson prayed earnestly for a revival of religion. It occasioned him the deepest sorrow to see his companions and friends living in sin and exposed to the wrath of God. In February there were tokens of the divine presence, and ere long the Spirit of God was poured out, and souls were converted. In April, John wrote to a friend as follows:

"NEWBURYPORT, April 6, 1838.

"DEAR FRIEND—It being some time since I have written to you, I thought I would take up my pen to address you a few lines. There has been a gracious outpouring of the Spirit in this town, and sinners have been converted, and God's people have been awakened. I feel that my own soul has been quickened; for I had, previous to that time, been cold and dead, and had got far away from God. But I trust the Spirit of the Lord has awakened me anew to my duty, and that I have a desire to labor in his vineyard and to do more for him than I have done before. Pray for me, my dear sir, that God would keep me in his way, and enable me to do his will. The work has been principally confined to the young, especially to young men from the age of sixteen to twenty. They appear very much engaged. I wish you could look into our meetings here, in the morning at half-past five, and see the young men conduct them. I think you would feel your own soul quickened. There is quite a waking up among the boys, for at a meeting last evening, at our house, there were eighteen or nine-

teen present. Your brother, Mr. John T——, was present and spoke with us a few evenings ago. I should like it very much if you could be here and meet with us. Pray for us and for this whole town, that the Lord would carry on his work.

"April 7. I have now returned from our morning meeting. It has been very interesting. They pray without being called on, and the Spirit of the Lord is evidently present among us. There are about one hundred who attend now, and there is also another meeting in another part of the town. Mr. Johnson from Boston was present with us this morning, and gave us some account of the state of religion there, which was very interesting. It was our union meeting of churches last evening. There was also a meeting especially for children. It was judged that about one hundred and fifty children were present. It was stated at the church-meeting last evening, that about two months ago it was thought the Spirit had begun to work, because two were interested. The next month there were nearly one hundred inquirers, and last night they spoke of

twenty that had hopefully experienced religion."

In May, 1838, John resumed his journal as follows:

"May 2. I am now reading a book on the hidden life of a Christian. It is a delightful work, holiness seems to breathe through it. How much I need an increase of holiness, and the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit. Oh that I might receive a fresh baptism from on high.

"May 3. I have received the news to-day of the death of a young lady in town, about seventeen years of age. She was sick but a short time, and was deprived of her reason previous to her departure. But I trust she has gone to that land where 'the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.' O that this event might solemnize our minds, and lead us all to be ready for the coming of the Son of man.

"May 6. Another Sabbath has dawned. May it be indeed a sweet sabbath of rest to my soul. May all distracting cares be left behind, while I go up to worship in God's

holy temple; and may it be a sweet prelude to that eternal sabbath of rest beyond the skies.

"During the past week a terrible accident has happened—the blowing up of a steamboat, by which over one hundred persons, almost without a moment's warning, were hurried into eternity. How it becomes us to watch and be ready for the summons to depart. We know not how soon we shall be called to render up our final account.

"This afternoon a sermon was preached on the occasion of the death of the young lady mentioned on the third. It was very solemn and impressive. The minister spoke to the younger members of the church to which she belonged, and asked them if they were faithful and prepared to meet God in peace. I pray that I may be enabled to look into my own heart, and see how I stand with my God. 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

"May 7. Began yesterday, 'The Christian Father's Present to his Children,' by Mr. James,

and 'Young Christian,' by Abbot; both of them very good books. May I be enabled to profit much by them.

"May 12. Have been reading a chapter in 'Father's Present,' etc., on decision in religion, and I think I need more of it. I think I am more afraid of the scoffs and sneers of the world than I ought to be. Lord, give me decision and strength to say *No* to wickedness.

"May 13. Another blessed Sabbath has dawned upon us. I have attended meeting this forenoon, and heard a discourse on Psalm 19 : 13, 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults.' The minister attempted to show some of our secret faults. He said, 'Supposing an angel from heaven should come in and write on the wall the thoughts of all present, how ashamed we should be.' I think all are guilty in this, and that we all have a great many impure and wicked thoughts, which we would not let even our most bosom friends know; still they are all known to a holy God. His eye is ever upon us all. This afternoon heard a very solemn discourse on the character of the traitor Judas. It was a powerful appeal to our church.

The minister said, 'There are Judases now, and probably there are some here.' O that we might be enabled to look into our own hearts, and ask, 'Lord, is it I? Is it I?'

"May 16. I have set apart this day as a day of special prayer to God for an increase of holiness, and for more of the influences of the Holy Spirit, which I greatly need. O that I might be enabled to ask in faith. On this day also the mothers hold their monthly meeting to pray for their children.

"May 20. It is again the sweet and peaceful Sabbath. O that it might be a foretaste of the eternal sabbath of rest. We love these earthly Sabbaths, but what a sabbath shall we keep when we shall rest above. Yet how little do we think of it, and how engrossed are our minds in the world. Lord, take off our affections from earth.

"May 27. Another Sabbath has returned. Have I done any thing for God the past week? Have I done any thing to save souls? Have I advanced any in holiness? I fear I have done very little. O Lord, waken this stupid heart to feel more and love more.

"SEPTEMBER 27. To-day completes my fifteenth year—fifteen years old! O my soul, look back upon the past and see how it has been spent. How little have I done for the cause of Christ. How little have I done in any good thing. Therefore, for my own good, as well as for the cause of Christ,

"*Resolved* 1. To rise early in the morning.

"2. To have my time of prayer before breakfast as often as I can.

"3. To strive to set a holy example at school, and before the world.

"4. To attend as regularly as I can on the monthly and week-day meetings of our church.

"5. To read, more than I have done, the lives of good and holy men.

"6. To feel and pray more fervently for the conversion of impenitent sinners.

"7. To be more kind and obliging to my younger brother.

"8. To read and study ancient history more.

"9. To cultivate more love for study.

"10. To have my time of evening prayer as soon as possible after supper.

"11. To try to do the things about house more cheerfully.

"12. To talk more on the subject of religion.

"13. To strive to do more for God's glory.

"14. To try in God's strength to keep these resolutions, so that if I am permitted to live to see my sixteenth birthday, it may find me more engaged for God and his cause than this birthday has."

Mr. Emerson was now fast ripening as a Christian. We have looked at his trials, and witnessed their effects upon his life and character. We should not overlook the advantages he enjoyed for spiritual culture. He was blessed with devotedly pious parents, who did all in their power to encourage and strengthen him in the divine life. Though he had severe trials abroad, yet in his pleasant home he found the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace.

A friend who resided in the family, and to whom John was ardently attached, took the deepest interest in his welfare. Her prayers, counsels, and sympathies, he valued very high-

ly. When he was quite young she was in the habit, as well as his parents, of retiring with him for social prayer, and these seasons were very refreshing to him. He referred to them in conversation with his mother on his dying-bed, and said, "Did we not have sweet communion together with God?"

The religious community by which Mr. Emerson was surrounded, was of a character eminently calculated to deepen and strengthen his piety. Through the influence of maternal associations, female prayer-meetings, and other religious privileges, Christian mothers strove to qualify themselves to discharge faithfully their duties to their children. Under a deep sense of their responsibility, they sought divine direction, took counsel one of another, and labored to train up their offspring in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." As the fruits of their toil, large numbers of their children have been brought into the church, and have occupied and still occupy posts of usefulness. The churches, too, have been long distinguished for their vigorous piety, sound doctrine, and wide-spread influence. Nor can

we fail to observe in these features the salutary effects of an able and devoted ministry, continued through a long series of years.

Under the influence of such piety was the character of young Emerson moulded. Such were the genial influences that nourished his faith, stimulated his hopes, and strengthened him for the duties and conflicts of life.

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CHAPTER III.

RESIDENCE AT AMHERST COLLEGE.

1840—1844.

In September, 1840, Mr. Emerson left his pleasant home to become a member of Amherst college. Possessing such filial affection, and depending so much upon his Christian friends for counsel, encouragement, and religious communion, it was hard to sunder even for a few months the ties that bound him so close to them. In bidding them farewell, his hearty grasp indicated the depth of his love, and the moistened eye and tremulous voice showed the conflicting emotions that were agitating his young heart. He was aware that new trials and untried dangers awaited him, and while on his journey he offered up his silent petitions to God to give him strength to discharge the duties and meet the perils that were before him.

Having passed a satisfactory examination, he was admitted a member of Amherst college,

September 23, 1840, being seventeen years of age. His letters and journal indicate his earnest desire to prosecute his studies with diligence, and improve to the utmost his time and advantages. Above all, his great desire was to make progress in the divine life, and be of service in the cause of his divine Master. From his letters we make the following extracts.

"I make it a point to keep close to my room, visit very little, and try to perform faithfully every college duty. I have the consciousness of having tried to do well in mathematics, even if I have not been successful. I have been but once absent from an exercise, and was then unavoidably detained. Above all, I try not to forget my duty to God, and the glory that is due to his name for having, as I trust, snatched me from the horrible pit when 'my steps had well-nigh slipped;' and I feel at times as if he did reveal himself to me as a prayer-hearing God.

"Have just returned from our usual Sunday noon exercise of prayer. I think of you now as assembled in that consecrated spot where

we used to meet and pour out our united supplications to our common God and Father. Doubtless you have been praying for me, who am far away from home. How sweet to think that we can pray to the same covenant-keeping God for blessings on each other. Shall we meet again in that consecrated spot? is a question of deep and thrilling interest. God in his infinite mercy grant we may; but if not, O that we may all, by his grace, be prepared to join that innumerable company, that blood-bought throng, 'the general assembly and church of the first-born,' whose names are written in heaven.

"I feel animated to-day with joy to see a different state of things among some of the Christians in college. I record it with joy and trembling: joy, because it seems like an indication of the outpouring of the Spirit; trembling, for fear it may prove like the morning cloud and early dew, which soon passeth away. Several prayer-meetings have been established, and some of the brethren seem to manifest a deep anxiety for the salvation of souls. Pray for us, that the Spirit may not pass us by; that

now, while there exists a tender state of feeling, the windows of heaven may be opened and a blessing descend. Pray much for me, that I may not have mere animal excitement, but a baptism of the Holy Ghost; that I may ever remember my high and holy calling, and keep near to God. O for more of the Spirit, for more conformity to him. There is need of watchfulness and prayer, lest I be entrapped in the wiles and snares of the enemy of souls. Pray unceasingly that I may be kept from the temptations of a college life."

Mr. Emerson was exceedingly attached to his Sabbath-school teacher, Mr. Charles Morse, and wrote to him frequently in the most affectionate manner. The following was addressed to him after a severe sickness:

"The Lord has been laying his rod heavily upon you; but doubtless you are ever ready to say, 'Let him do what seemeth him good.' I have sympathized with you, my dear brother, in your pains and sufferings, and gladly, O how gladly, would I have flown to your bedside to minister to your wants, and if possible

to soothe your pains; but that privilege was denied me, and I could only bear you on my heart in supplication at the throne of grace. God has been better to me than my fears, and has raised you up, I trust, to be an instrument of great and extensive usefulness in the world. To me you have been, as it were, a spiritual father. Your kind admonitions, counsels, warnings, and anxiety for my welfare, can never be effaced from my memory. Your unwearied efforts for my good, your desires for my growth in grace, your tender and watchful solicitude lest I should go astray, your affectionate farewell the night before I left for college, cannot soon be forgotten, and will endear you to me by a thousand ties.

"I suppose you will be interested to know something of the state of my feelings during the past winter. I cannot say that I have been visited with any special manifestations of the divine Spirit, but still I have at times an inward longing to be made more and more like my Redeemer. I have to lament over my own sin and folly and departure from Christ. O how cold have I been in his service; how little

have I done for him. At times I hardly know whether I am a child of his or not.

'If I love, why am I thus?
Why this cold and lifeless frame?'

"I can truly say, 'O, that I were as in months past;' for I do believe, my dear Christian brother, that I have seen times in years gone by when I drew very near to God, and held sweet communion with him in prayer and praise. I trust those happy days, those 'golden hours,' have not for ever fled. Pray for me, that I may not halt in the 'race that is set before me.' I trust you are dwelling near the throne, and drinking deeply at the fountain-head. Write to me, my dear brother, some of your own experience. It would be very gratifying to me at all times to receive counsel and direction from you in the Christian course. We have been much together, and you well know how to advise."

While Mr. Emerson was prosecuting with faithfulness his studies, and gaining every day the confidence of his teachers and the affection of his class-mates, his soul burned with long-

ings for a revival of religion. In January, 1841, he wrote thus to his mother:

"Dear Mother—I have just returned from our usual Thursday evening lecture. We had a minister here to preach, who I believe is from Deerfield. Chum and I have just been speaking about the prospects of a revival here at this time. He says, Mrs. F. remarked that the revivals which have occurred here have taken place during this term; and something rather singular occurred to-night. Two of the most hardened students, apparently, in college, came in to the lecture this evening. For what purpose I cannot tell. May it not possibly be an indication for good? May it not be that God is about to pour out his Spirit on Amherst college? O, continue to pray for us. That you do pray for us, I do not doubt; but continue, continue to pray.

"The last Thursday in February will doubtless be an interesting season to you this year, if you are spared to see it. O, that Amherst college might be especially remembered. I wish I felt more for it myself. But, alas, I

feel that I must begin at home. I find that my own garden needs culture before I can undertake for others. How far have I lived from duty and God. How unholy an example have I set. I feel that I need to be awakened. Christians here need a revival as well as sinners. There seems to be a kind of lethargic stupor among them upon the great and all-important subject of religion. They do not seem to be engaged in carrying forward the cause of the blessed Redeemer. But what wonders would a revival work upon the hearts of all. May each one be enabled to say, with the psalmist David, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'"

"SUNDAY-NOON. We have had a very solemn and impressive discourse this forenoon from President Humphrey, on the parable of the unprofitable fig-tree. The house was quite still, and the audience seemed to be attentive. O that it might prove to be a day of conversion to God to many souls. He spoke very solemnly, also, to professors of religion. 'Three years have I

come and sought fruit on this my vine. Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?" May we all hear the warning voice, and be enabled this year to bring forth much fruit to the honor of our Redeemer's name.

"I think I have great reason to bless my heavenly Father for the many distinguishing mercies he has shown towards me, in placing me in this seminary of learning, in continuing me here a term, in permitting me to see my friends in peace and safety, and returning me to this place again in health. How many mercies have I to thank the Lord for. Truly, my cup overfloweth with blessings. Yet how cold and stupid I remain. Do pray that I may be quickened in duty, that I may have more faith, more of the influence of the Holy Spirit; that I may live nearer to Christ, be less conformed to the fashion of this world; and that I may be enabled to do some good, even in this place, and advance in useful knowledge and in the path to the heavenly Canaan. I have reason to regret that since I came into Christ's visible church I have done so little for him who hath done so much for me; that I have set

so unholy an example and lived so unprofitably."

During his second year in college, his prayers and those of God's people were answered by a precious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. An account of the work and the state of Mr. Emerson's feelings may be gathered from the following letters:

"I was very much surprised and delighted last Saturday evening, at receiving a large folio sheet filled with interesting intelligence from home. I hardly knew how to begin to read it, I was so overjoyed. I ran into the next room the first thing, to show the letter and to have my friends rejoice with me. The contents were of the most pleasing kind. To hear that you were having an outpouring of the Spirit was truly refreshing. My own soul seemed to be revived. Before I received your letter, I trust that I had a fresh visitation of the Spirit from on high. Dr. Humphrey appointed a meeting that evening, a general meeting, and invited such as had accounts of revivals from other places to rise and state them. Many

rose. I felt as if it was my duty to rise and speak, but it was a great cross. There was an impenitent person in the room, before whom I felt as if I dared not speak. Conscience whispered that this was the cross, and I must not go round it; and almost before I was aware, I was upon my feet, giving an account of the revival in Newburyport. I felt that I had done my duty, and it gave me a new impulse to go forward in my Christian course.

"During this week I have been in a different state of mind. Communion in the closet and religious duty have been sweet, and I think I have found a near access to my heavenly Father; and now what I want is firm faith, and grace to persevere even unto the end. There is nothing to me like taking a decided stand in religion. I have thoroughly proved that. I have found it so, in my refusal to attend that convivial entertainment last term, which I told you of when at home. That was the touchstone with those students to try the firmness of my principles; and now they shun me, and do not dare to invite me to partake of their festivities. Every new cross I take up,

every self-denial I make for my Lord and Master, gives me a new impulse, a new spur in my Christian course. I think I am now striving daily to guard against my easily besetting sins; and though I fall into them heedlessly now and then, I try not to be discouraged, but make a new trial, and look to heaven for strength and support."

"May 9, 1842. The students having most of them gone home, of course we cannot expect any thing of particular interest in college at present. Having been left alone some of the time, I have been able to devote a part of it to reflection and religious meditation. I carried myself back to-day in imagination to the times when I first felt that I had an interest in the atoning blood of Christ, and when I was led to make a profession of my faith in Christ, and compared them with my present state of feeling, and I could not but exclaim, 'Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?' I believe, dear mother, if ever I had true love for the Saviour, it was then; if ever I did any thing from a true desire of fulfilling all the will of God, it was when I entered into

a solemn public engagement with him to be for ever his. Those were days when I felt genuine love to God burning in my heart, and when I believed I could truly say, 'I am my Lord's, and he is mine;' when 'I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste; when he brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.'

"Though now, I trust, I have an interest in the atoning blood of the Redeemer, and have been washed and sanctified, yet I do not have those holy exercises of mind, those sweet foretastes of heaven, those clear evidences of eternal salvation, which I formerly had; that strict conscientious uprightness I am also wanting in, which I formerly possessed. I thank you heartily for the good and wholesome advice which you gave me in your last letter. O, that I may indeed be 'an uncommon Christian,' a 'living witness' for God. Though we, as yet, have no revival here, we are still waiting for the blessing. You have heard of the very powerful revival of religion in Williams college. The feeling was so great that some

of the exercises were suspended. When shall we witness such an outpouring of the Spirit here?"

In June, the shower which had been so long anticipated descended.

"AMHERST COLLEGE, June 16, 1842.

"DEAR MOTHER—In view of the existing state of things in this institution, I can no longer refrain from addressing you a letter, in order that your soul as well as mine may be refreshed by the glorious tidings. The Lord in deed and in truth is pouring out his Spirit upon our beloved college. A cheering revival of religion is in progress. After long years of drought and spiritual death, Almighty God, in his boundless and infinite mercy, has seen fit to refresh this part of his thirsty Zion with a shower of divine grace. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.' I attempted in a former letter to give you a brief account of its commencement, and of the then increasing interest among us. I will now give you some particulars with regard to its further progress, and its wonderful and soul-cheering effects. And O, my beloved mother,

if the only fruit of this blessed revival has been the return of your own wandering, sinful, prodigal son to his Father and his God, would there not be joy among the angels in heaven, and joy, praise, and thanksgiving in at least one heart on earth on this account?

But God, in his infinite loving-kindness, has not stopped here. He has brought back, as we humbly trust, most of his erring, backsliding children in this institution to himself. The 'new song' has been put into the mouths of many of those who but a short time since were the *bitterest* enemies of the cross of Christ, and whose tongues were filled with curses and revilings. He has also stopped the mouths of those who were the opposers of revivals of religion in our colleges, on account of their occurring so periodically—such revivals having usually taken place in the spring term, in the months of March and April—by granting us a gracious outpouring of his Holy Spirit in the summer term, an unusual and unexpected time, and a time when all were busily engaged, the seniors in preparing for commencement, and the other classes for our regular summer exhi-

bition. He has taken not only those who were not thus engaged, but some of those who were most busily employed, and made them trophies of divine grace.

"There has been no very particular excitement, no remarkably unusual stir, no suspension of studies or omission of college exercises. Though we have meetings every day and evening, filled to overflowing, and the most profound attention paid to the preaching of the word, and many, as we have reason to hope, are thereby convicted of their sins and guilt and led to seek refuge in the ark of safety, yet it is for the most part in the private room and in the closet that we hear the stifled sobs of the convicted, and the fervent thanksgivings of the redeemed. One by one they are led to seek for pardon and salvation by means of 'the great atonement,' and week by week do we hear fresh accessions to the ranks of the Redeemer's chosen ones.

"Two weeks ago to-morrow the Christians in this institution held a day of fasting and prayer. It was not noised abroad. It was not publicly announced from the pulpit, but each

Christian came by individual invitation into a meeting the night before, and we were there earnestly exhorted to humble ourselves before God on the coming day, and to entreat him to continue the influences of his Spirit among us. Private prayer and humiliation in the closet were chiefly recommended. We, however, met from the hour of twelve till two in my room, for the purpose of social prayer. The room was filled, and the Spirit of God was shed down upon us. We met also at five o'clock in another room, and invited in the impenitent. It was a solemn time.

"The next day occurred the celebration of the Lord's supper, and it was a precious season to many souls. It was during this and the succeeding week that God began to make more signal displays of his love and mercy. Before this, quite a number in the Freshman class had been anxiously inquiring the way of salvation, and some few had indulged a trembling hope. But the work now began to spread into the other classes. The members of our own class met frequently to pray for our impenitent brethren. There were three, however,

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in the class, who were so hardened in iniquity, that though we committed them to our God in prayer, still it seemed as if we could not have faith that they would be brought into the kingdom. But O, how weak and vain is man. The first member of our class that was brought under conviction was one of these three. His attention was arrested by a sermon that was preached on Sabbath evening. The next case of conversion in our class was another of these three, and it was a most striking and wonderful conversion. Its subject was a most hardened rebel, one whose mouth had been 'filled with cursing and bitterness,' one who drank to intoxication, and, in fact, one who was considered as being sunk as low in every species of vice and profanity as any person in college. He had been so vile, that not a person had even dared to ask him into a religious meeting. And it was from this fact, that he, by the powerful aid of the Spirit of God, was led to look upon his lost and ruined condition as a sinner, and to cry to God for mercy. He was sitting in his room alone a week ago to-night; and as he sat, he began to think of the revival

which was in progress in college, and why it was, that when every other member of the class had been conversed with on the subject of religion, and urged to immediate repentance, he had been passed by. This led him to reflect on his past course; and as he reflected, the truth was powerfully set home to his heart. The following day he strove, by plunging into vice, to drive away his impressions, but could not succeed. On Sunday he went in deep distress to Prof. T., and told him of his situation. All day Monday he was under deep conviction, and Monday evening he was led to give himself wholly up into the hands of his Redeemer.

"But I cannot enumerate individual cases. They are too many and too striking. *All* the Junior class except three are indulging hope in Christ, and one of those three is under deep conviction. The Lord is doing indeed a mighty work. Our most open opposers have been brought to bow to the Saviour. In one entry, where they boasted that a prayer-meeting could not be held, all but four are indulging hope. One of those, a most hardened wretch heretofore, is under deep impressions, and an-

other is out of town. I have only room to add, pray, pray abundantly for us. We want to see all in this college brought in."

"AMHERST, July 15, 1842.

"DEAR MOTHER—If your absent son was conversing with you face to face, would not your two first interrogatories be, 'Is your health good?' and, 'Are you yet continuing strong in the Lord?' To the first I would say, 'Yes,' and to the second I would reply—humbly, I hope—'I trust I am.' My dear mother, the only evidence that I get of a change in my feelings is, that from day to day I find a nearness to God and a devotion to his cause, which I have not felt in weeks and months past. And though I am still carnal, though I have still within me an 'evil heart of unbelief,' which prompts me to neglect duty and to go into the by-paths of sin and folly, yet I trust I am in a manner enabled to resist temptation, and to come off victorious over *some* of my adversaries. I find that it must be by constant prayer, constant watching, constant effort, by living near to God and keeping eternal things in view, that I can continue in

this frame of mind and pursue a Christian course. When I am led away into temptation, as I sometimes am, I do not feel as I did before like giving up all for lost and returning again to my former courses; but I find I am enabled to go to God with some degree of penitence for my sin, and in my closet mourn over it, and there seek strength and guidance for the future. But O, we shall never be freed from this load of guilt and sin which is weighing us down, till we rest in heaven.

"I try from day to day to think of death, and of the manner in which I should wish to live, did I know that death was at the door. But I find that 'in many things I offend, and in all I come short.' I find every now and then some sin unthought of before, which I have been committing—some avenue of guilt into which I have been straying, though it was unheeded by me before. Thus I perceive that I can never lay my armor down on earth, but must *continue* to 'fight the good fight.' Perhaps this has been my fault heretofore. I have been striving after perfection, and when I found that I did not reach it, have felt like

giving up the contest and dropping my armor. But perfection cannot be attained in this life, and we must fight if we would reign. An increasing love for the closet I feel as if I now possessed. When I can get alone by myself and pour out my soul in prayer to God, and feel the influences of the Holy Spirit resting upon me, I believe it is one of the sweetest seasons I enjoy on earth. You know that I date my first decline in religion from a neglect of those seasons. God grant that it may never be so again. I may not feel the neglect at first. I think I did not then. But it does have a silent influence, and its dreadful effects will sooner or later be felt through the whole Christian system; for,

> 'Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air.'

I am striving to conform my life more and more to the pattern which my Lord and Master has set me, and to be a 'burning and a shining light.'

"My Bible, I think, I relish much more than formerly. I am now reading it in course; began with Romans and have got to Hebrews.

Some of Paul's charges to Timothy, to Christians, to backsliders, etc., I find very useful to myself at this time. An increasing taste for 'good books,' also, I think I possess. I am in the habit of reading every day one sermon of that devoted and pious man, W. B. Homer. Have you read his memoir? If not, I think you and Eliza would be greatly interested in it. I hope to read to you some in it when I get home.

"I have nothing particularly new to write concerning the religious interest in college. I believe there have no new conversions taken place since I wrote you last. Though the interest manifested is not so deep as it was a few weeks since, yet there is still a good attendance upon our meetings and much of the spirit of prayer. We have a prayer-meeting every day, either at half-past one or five P. M., which is generally well attended. Preaching three or four evenings in a week. Those who have indulged hope all continue to appear well. This is very cheering. I long to see you, that I may tell you more particularly about them than I can on paper. I long to be at some of

your evening meetings. Is there a good attendance? Do the Monday evening church prayer-meetings continue? I wish old Mrs. Beck's prophetic revival might occur while I am at home. I think I anticipate more religious enjoyment this vacation, than I have at any other. Our Sunday noon prayer-meetings in the chamber, I think much of. I pray for you at such seasons individually, and I pray for the church.

"Sometimes I think, dear mother, that my course for a few months past is to be blessed to both of us. Perhaps you were thinking too much of my being such a Christian as J. B. Taylor was, while in college, and God has disappointed you. Perhaps I placed too much confidence in self, and he has humbled me in this manner. I hope I shall be enabled to make any sacrifice for Christ. But I know I have sin in me still, and I, above all others, need to keep close to God if I would abstain from it. O, do all of you pray for me that I may be kept from falling into sin."

Journal letter for his mother.

"October 2, 1842. A calm and pleasant

Sabbath. A sacred day of rest. Sweet foretaste of the eternal sabbath in the upper sanctuary. All nature seems to harmonize with the quiet stillness of this day of rest. I had a peculiarly interesting season of prayer this noon for my beloved parents and friends; I prayed for each one in particular. I thought of my dear mother, kneeling alone perhaps in the room where we, her children, have so often at noon of the holy Sabbath knelt with her; and now they are both, in the providence of God, removed from her for a season. As I thought, I felt my heart drawn out in prayer for her, and for the dear younger brother who has just gone from under the paternal roof. I prayed that he might never forget the pious counsels he has had instilled into his youthful mind, and that he might be kept from the temptations of that great city whither he has gone. It was to me a hallowed hour. O for many more such.

"October 4. A most interesting monthly concert of prayer was held last evening in college, and very fully attended. The claims of a dying world were urged upon us with pe-

culiar force, and interesting statements were read. Professor H., in speaking of deciding upon what was our duty with regard to going out as foreign missionaries, remarked, that the question ought not to be with us, 'Shall I go?' for that is our Saviour's express command to every one of his professed disciples: 'Go ye into all the world;' but, 'Shall I remain at home?' 'Are there reasons sufficient to justify my staying at home to preach the gospel?' If not, then he thought it was plainly our duty to go. He believed it was proper for a student to make up his mind in college, on this subject, and become early imbued with a missionary spirit; 'for do we not find,' said he, 'that those persons who have made the greatest advancement in science, literature, and the arts, turned their attention early to these subjects?' So should it be in the missionary cause.

"Lord, teach me my duty. I have begun to read the Missionary Herald. I became interested in the September number. Last Sabbath I read part of the October number aloud to a friend in college, and we mean to continue the plan of reading regularly if we can.

"Sabbath-noon, October 9. I have just risen from my knees, where I have been praying for the dear church of which I am a member, whose members, I doubt not, are at this moment sitting at the table of their Lord and Master, to commemorate his dying love. I have prayed for a descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, and I trust that the season will prove indeed 'a feast of fat things' to their souls.

"October 11. I have had my mind much occupied for a day or two by having some exercises to prepare for college. I find that such things are apt to take off my attention from higher and spiritual duties. O for more devotedness to God, and more engagedness in his service. I want more of that spirit which will enable me at all times to keep near to God, and inspire me with more devotedness to his cause.

"October 13. The return of our Thursday evening lecture puts me in mind of the good old Wednesday evening meetings at home. O how have I enjoyed those meetings, though sometimes they have seemed so tedious. Some

of the happiest hours of my life have been spent in that old out-of-the-way chapel, and I could not even now see it torn down to give place to a new one without deep feelings of sorrow. We hardly ever prize our privileges while they are in our possession. When they are gone we look back upon them, and reflect how we *might* have been benefited by them."

Mr. Emerson sometimes received special visitations of divine grace, as in the following instance:

"AMHERST, Feb. 10, 1843.

"You will want to know something, dear mother, with regard to my religious feelings, and I have long been wanting to write you concerning them. I believe I mentioned to you in a former letter something about the state of my mind the Sabbath after I returned. That was indeed a day of visitation to my soul from on high. As I was sitting in church on that day, in a most unaccountable and surprising manner I seemed to have poured upon me the influences of God's Holy Spirit. I looked upon things in the light of eternity, and the realities of immortality seemed pressing on

my view. I was led to look in a different light on my duty, and felt that it was high time I should be awake, and be up and doing. I resolved to live nearer to God, to give up my easily besetting sins, and examine myself to see whether I was in the faith. Those impressions, I trust, have not left me. I think I may say in truth, God has met me by the influences of his Holy Spirit, and I have had a revival in my soul.

"Since then, my Bible has been to me a delight, and my prayers a joy and comfort. I have found it sweet to meditate on God and heaven and divine things. I have been enabled to look forward with some degree of calmness to the time when I shall have to leave all things below, and be here no more for ever. This precious season was sudden and unexpected. No particular sermon, or prayer, or remark, arrested my attention. It seemed to be the Spirit of God whispering in my ear, and urging upon me anew my duty.

"You spoke in your letter about my birthday. I remembered it, and offered up fervent prayer on that day for future strength. I trust

I am enabled to make some advances in holiness, and in the divine life. I have felt of late more of a spirit of prayer, and a stronger determination to press on in my Christian course. I begin now to realize more than ever the responsibilities which will come upon me when I leave college. I look forward to them at times with some anxiety, but I place my trust in God. He can give help in every time of need. I hope to be able to get much discipline of mind this year, and to be prepared to be a successful teacher when I leave college."

Again, in June, 1843, God graciously visited the college, and souls were converted. Indeed, as we shall see, revivals of religion seemed to attend our beloved brother to the very close of his career.

"AMHERST, June 24, 1843.

"DEAR MOTHER—Though you have received a letter from me this week, and may not be expecting one so soon again, yet I feel desirous of writing to you, because I am persuaded you will be anxious to know how the work of the Lord is progressing among us, and because I

am assured that a line, however often, from your dear, and, I trust, humbled son, will not come amiss. I am rejoiced to be able to inform you that the Lord is still continuing his good work, and the Spirit, by his convicting and converting influences, is still manifestly among us. Though the past week has not been so signally marked with displays of divine grace as the week before, yet we trust that three have been born into the kingdom of our God since the week commenced, two from the Freshman class and one from ours.

"Last Saturday the professors of religion in college had a day of fasting and prayer. Much fervent supplication was offered up. I devoted the forenoon to prayer, perusing the Scriptures, and meditation. I took different subjects, and made them one by one the burden of my prayers, retiring to my closet at intervals during the forenoon. Our class met in an adjoining room, at one o'clock, to pray for spiritual blessings to descend upon us. At five P. M. we had a general meeting for all the members of college in the rhetorical-room. My own mind had been, during the day, in rather a gloomy,

desponding, and doubting frame; but between the hours of eight and nine in the evening, as I was alone in my room pouring out my soul in prayer to Almighty God, light broke in upon me, and I felt a nearness of access to God which I had not experienced during the day. I trust I felt my heart going out in love to my Saviour and my God. O, what a power there is in secret prayer.

"Sunday morning was a time long to be remembered in this institution. In our morning meeting, some of those who had lately indulged hope in Christ rose and led in prayer. It was truly affecting to hear from the lips of one who had only a few days before been cursing and blaspheming his Maker, thanksgiving and praise for his deliverance from the thraldom of sin and iniquity. Those who have been the most haughty, the most profane and wicked, and the most opposed to this good work, have been made to bow at the feet of Jesus. Some of those who were from the most respectable, wealthy, and influential families, and who would have considered it a lasting disgrace to be seen in a meeting of any kind,

except when obliged to go by the faculty, are now seen sitting like little children at the feet of Jesus, and humbly supplicating at the throne of his grace. One of the most pleasing and delightful features of this revival has been the unity and harmony of spirit which has pervaded the hearts of Christians. Where before there was wrangling, bitterness, and contention, all now is peace and love.

"You will be desirous to know, dear mother, the state of my own feelings at this most interesting time; but I hardly dare express them. I trust I am 'strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.' If I know my own heart, I am fully determined to live for God. But O, if I am deceived with regard to my hope, what a dreadful thing it will be. I strive to examine myself daily at the bar of conscience, and by the word of God, to see whether I am living aright. I often ask myself the question, If I am this night called away, can I say sincerely, 'I know in whom I have believed?' One great evidence that I get of my change of heart, is an increased love for my closet duties, and for the ordinances and worship of God's

house. I feel as if the things that once I loved, now I hate, and those I hated, now I love. I tremble lest I should again be left of God. I feel that I need to keep very close to my Saviour. I do not ask you to pray for me, my dear mother, for I know that abundant, fervent prayer goes forth from your lips, that Almighty God would bless and keep your absent son from the paths of vice and folly, and enable him to lead a holy life."

Mr. Emerson, in other letters, alludes to his studies, and gives sometimes a detailed account of the branches to which he devoted his attention. It was his constant aim to discharge faithfully every duty. His influence among the students was of the happiest character. His diligence, his kindness and courtesy, and above all, his ardent piety, made a salutary impression upon those around him. His attachments to his class-mates continued through life, as his correspondence abundantly shows.

He graduated with honor, August 8, 1844. The last scenes of college life deeply impressed his mind. He was anxious to return to his pleasant home, and yet it was painful to part

with his class-mates, and especially with those with whom he had taken sweet spiritual communion. But the changes incident to human life he felt that he must submit to. His sadness, however, was mingled with devout thankfulness to God, for having carried him safely through his college course, and conducted him so far towards the great object of his heart's desire, the gospel ministry.

CHAPTER IV.

RESIDENCE IN CONWAY, MASS.

1844—1846.

Mr. Emerson's father having been unsuccessful in business, his son was desirous of earning something towards his own support. Accordingly, in September, 1844, he went to Conway, Mass., the place of his grandfather's ministerial labors, and there took charge of a school.

His qualifications for teaching were of a very high order, and he entered upon his new duties with ardent desires to mould the character, as well as promote the intellectual development of his pupils. He carried with him to Conway his devotional spirit, his habits of self-contemplation and secret prayer, and his deep interest in the salvation of souls. The Spirit of God seemed to attend him and to direct his steps. In his school, in the families with whom he boarded, in the church, and in

the community, he labored to exert a strong religious influence.

After being at Conway a short time, he wrote to his parents as follows:

"September 15, 1844.

"Mr. Harris has preached at home all day. I think I shall enjoy his preaching very much. Our intermission is only an hour and a quarter at noon, and I do not know but I shall have to observe our season of prayer after meeting in the afternoon. There is so much going in and out here, in the intermission, that I cannot very well be retired. I trust the season will continue to be one of great interest and profit to us both. I have consented for the present to supply any vacancy of a teacher which may occur from Sabbath to Sabbath, and shall not take a regular class just yet. Mr. Harris wishes me to take charge of a Sunday evening meeting, but I don't feel spiritual life enough to do it. I wish I was more engaged. I know I need to be. Do, my dear parents, pray that I may have a quickening from on high. I do not feel as if I was at all qualified for the great work of the ministry. I have none

of those feelings which were manifested by J. B. Taylor, Homer, and others. If I do not feel as if I could speak in a prayer-meeting here, O what shall I do when called upon to address the great congregation? The Lord grant me his Spirit.

"My first week in Conway has closed. How many weeks I shall spend here, God only knows. I feel as if I had made a beginning, and could go on for this term. I think I can say I do like Conway. Every thing conspires to make it pleasant. It is a favorable time of year, and fine weather, and I feel as if my name gave me a license to become acquainted with anybody. People seem disposed to be familiar, and invite me freely to come and see them. I hope to be able not only to make myself contented here, but also to do good, and grow in knowledge and grace."

"October 1, 1844.

"My school is still flourishing; every Wednesday afternoon we have an exercise in composition and declamation. My evenings are spent in reading, writing, and visiting. I was glad to receive your letter on the morning of

Fast-day, and to know that you also had been looking forward to the day with feelings of interest. It proved a good day to me. I gave up my school in the afternoon and attended meeting. It was the fullest church meeting I have attended since I have been in Conway. There was a spirit of freedom, and I thought the power of the Holy Ghost was present. In the evening I attended our usual Thursday evening prayer-meeting.

"I must tell you a little about our religious state. We begin to have the hearing ear among us. The number in the district where I am now boarding, that attend meeting on Sabbath evening, varies from sixty to seventy-five, and I am permitted to speak to them every week of things pertaining to the Saviour's kingdom. We have had some solemn meetings, great attention, and considerable weeping, but as yet no signs of genuine repentance. One encouraging fact I will mention. A professor in this neighborhood, who has for a long time been indifferent to the things of religion, has received a sudden and powerful refreshing and come out decidedly for the cause again. He

now assists his brethren by his prayers and exhortations. Other symptoms of vitality have begun to appear in members of the church, in different parts of the town. In view of this state of things, I proposed to three of the brethren to set apart Monday evening for special prayer for this village in which we are laboring. The plan met their views, and we held our first meeting a fortnight ago last Monday eve. Mr. H—— met with us, and we had a comforting season. At our second meeting, we agreed to devote a few minutes at nine o'clock every evening in our closets, to pray for the same object; also to converse personally with some impenitent sinner.

Every fortnight, Mr. C—— and I go into a neighboring district on Saturday evening, to help the brethren in sustaining a prayer-meeting which was commenced this fall. The attendance thus far has been very encouraging. We are looking for a revival with some hope and great fear. If we could only get clear of self, and feel that God alone must be glorified, and precious souls saved from the second death, we should have more encouragement. But this

one thing, I believe, we are fully determined to do—to pray that we may serve and glorify God, and in this we are united as touching one thing. I set apart Saturday, the 27th, for prayer, meditation, reading the Scriptures, and reviewing my journal; had a cheering day. I found a record which I made on the day I was eleven years old, which affected me very much. I hope I gave myself away anew to the Lord on that day."

Mr. Emerson took a very deep personal interest in the happiness and welfare of all his pupils, entering cordially into their joys and sorrows. This is touchingly illustrated by the following incident:

"To night is one of those times in which I feel peculiarly like writing, and such times have been more frequent since I returned from home than ever before. I have been transported back to-day to the time when I was ten years old, and have been passing through, in imagination, some of the scenes that I then passed through, and have exclaimed, 'O that I felt and lived and prayed as in months past.'

"The cause of these feelings is this: I have

attended, this afternoon, the funeral of the father of one of my best scholars. He was one of our most respectable and wealthy citizens, and only the last winter represented the town in the legislature at Boston. He died of consumption, aged forty-two, leaving four children, three of them under twelve years of age. Their own mother died about four years since, a pious, lovely woman. They deeply mourned her loss. Her eldest son, now just past fifteen, was very affectionate, kind, and attentive to her. Her death made a deep impression on his mind, and soon after that event he indulged a hope of salvation; and at the age of twelve united with the church. He has proved himself, I think, a Christian indeed. I learn from a gentleman who lived next door to him, that he always used to overhear him, morning and evening, at his private devotions, in which he was very punctual. He has attended my school ever since I have been in Conway, and has been in my Sabbath-school class. I think he has the most amiable disposition of any boy I ever met with. He is fitting for college, and is almost, if not quite, the best scholar I have

had in my school. I never loved a scholar as I have loved him. He is so manly, so mature, so conscientious, so strictly upright, that you could not help loving him with all your heart. So punctual has he been in his attendance, that, until a few days ago, when his father was taken worse, he rarely failed of being present in his seat. All my sympathies have been enlisted in his behalf, during the last fortnight. His father went out until that time. Then he became deranged, and remained so, except at intervals, until his death.

"The little fellow loved his father dearly. I well recollect one morning, after I had made mention of him in my morning prayer at school, that he cried as if his heart would break, and it was a long time before the violence of his feelings could be repressed. And never shall I forget the morning of his father's death. His friends had promised to send for him, if there was a change; and just after school had commenced on Thursday, the other boys saw his younger brother coming at full speed down the hill. The color quickly forsook his cheek, for he knew too well his

errand. 'He's dying,' said the little messenger, and I turned to call my pupil out. But I found I could not speak, and I beckoned him to the door. With a face wet with tears, he looked up to me and said, 'Shall I take my satchel?' I could not help noticing, and being struck with the question. So faithful had he always been to take home his books for study, that even in that dread hour he hardly knew whether it would be duty to leave them. 'No,' I exclaimed, as I hastily took them from him, and bade him hurry home. His father breathed his last just as he reached the door.

"It would have melted your heart could you have seen him stand to-day, in the presence of the vast crowd assembled at the funeral, and drop his scalding tears thick and fast upon the face of that beloved father, now cold in death. After the funeral, I went to the house to invite him to take a walk. 'This seems a gloomy world to-night,' said the poor boy. I felt almost unable to reply to any thing he said, for though young in years he was truly old in sorrow. We conversed together on death and eternity, and it was a solemn

hour. So like my own experience did his conversion seem, that I was, as I said at the beginning of this letter, transported back to the time when I was ten or twelve years of age. I have often spoken of late to large audiences, in the conference-room, but never have I spoken with such heartfelt emotion as I did when I addressed that audience of only one, seated on an old board in a retired place whither we had strayed. I hope I shall be enabled to do him much good. I must ask your pardon for having filled so much of my letter with this account; but my heart is full of it, and I could write nothing else now."

It is interesting to notice that whatever topic Mr. Emerson may commence writing upon, we are certain, very soon, to find him floating on the stream of his religious feelings. It is also a significant fact, that wherever he was, he witnessed the descent of the showers of divine grace around him.

After excusing himself for not writing before, he says,

"NOVEMBER 7, 1845. Just before my cold came on, I had agreed to deliver the annual

address before the Conway Agricultural Association. I did it reluctantly; at first positively refusing: but on being more earnestly solicited, I consented. Immediately after I had consented to do this, the Lord commenced raining down righteousness upon us. I verily believe we are on the eve, if not in the beginning, of a glorious revival of religion. As soon as these indications of good commenced, I felt as if I must be in the work; and the very week in which I wrote a large part of my address, I not only was in school every day, but also attended a meeting *every evening* during the week, riding one evening three or four miles to attend one. * * *

"You will be anxious to hear more about the interest in religion. It has commenced in this village, and the first case of awakening was in the house next to the one where I board. I think I have already written you about the increased attendance on our meetings, and the new spirit of prayer which had been stirred up among some of the brethren. This has been continually increasing; and a few Sabbaths ago there was a minister in town

from Arkansas. In the evening he came up and preached a most powerful sermon in the school-house in this district, and the truth took deep root. The next day one of the girls who works in the factory came to him to inquire the way of eternal life.

"Last Saturday evening I attended a most solemn meeting. The voices of new-born souls were heard, testifying of God's goodness and giving praise to his name. The meeting was solemn as the grave, the silence broken only by the outbursting and irrepressible tears and sobs of those present. There is also a very interesting state of things in the church. At the preparatory lecture, a week ago, after preaching a most excellent and appropriate sermon, Mr. H. was so much affected that it was with difficulty he got through his last prayer. The church were melted. When we came together yesterday, some feared that the interest was somewhat diminished on account of the meeting the evening before. But no; the feeling had increased. The church were again melted into brokenness of heart, and we felt that it was good to be there."

He relates the following incident as having occurred on his journey to Conway:

"I was very much interested in a young man that I found boarding in Mr. B.'s family. They said he was a very good young man, but rather 'green;' 'verdant' they called it. I soon found, however, that his greenness consisted in his readiness to speak at any time on the subject of religion. A Universalist commenced a discussion with him during the evening, and for two hours the young man defended the religion of Christ like a good soldier. It was triumphant, unanswerable. I slept with him that night. Without knowing that I was a professor of religion, or that I cared for any of these things, he took down his Bible and announced his intention of reading. I of course assented. He read a passage and commented on it, and then offered a short and fervent prayer to the throne of grace. We lay awake till near twelve o'clock, conversing on religion, and I found that he took a deep interest in the welfare of P. and L. He has offered L. a seat free in Park-street church, if he will attend regularly."

In December, the revival reached his school, and the desire of his heart was gratified in the conversion of some of his pupils.

"My school has opened very prosperously, numbering twenty-nine scholars, and I am expecting another soon. But best of all, the Lord has poured out his Spirit upon us. I have ten young ladies, and, if I can judge correctly, all but one are interested in the subject of religion. Three are professors, three have lately indulged hope, and three appear anxious, and are beginning to attend the inquiry-meeting. C. H., of whom I wrote you in my last letter, attends my school, and appears well. P. B. is quite engaged, and is, I think, doing good. He took home one of his companions to spend the night with him, a short time since, and conversed with him on the subject of religion. He found his mind quite tender. Things appear different in school. Instead of trifling and vanity, I now hear such words as, 'meeting,' 'inquiry-meeting,' 'eternal things.' On the whole, I think I may safely say we are enjoying a precious revival of religion. The work seems to be principally in the centre of

the town. The evening meetings are very fully attended. Although there was quite a storm last Thursday, a number came two or three miles to attend the evening conference. Extra prayer-meetings are established, and well attended. The work is very silent, unusually so. On this account I hope it will prove lasting and genuine. Some young men in town appear to be serious, and it is hoped that they will soon come out on the Lord's side. Mr. H. is constantly engaged, and active. I have not called on him yet, but hope to have a talk with him soon. I of course cannot be unmoved amid such a state of things, but I feel my insufficiency. Every day convinces me that, if I am a Christian, I am not where I should be. I trust I have some longings to be more like Christ, and something of an earnest desire to *continue* in his love. I feel sick of this living by impulses. I want 'to *abide* under the shadow of the Almighty.' I have again commenced a course of self-examination, and hope, by the grace of God, to be enabled to prosecute it. I have endeavored to give more time to secret prayer, and

have commenced the reading of Isaiah, with Scott."

The revival continued into January, 1846. He writes again as follows:

"It would have given you joy to witness such scenes as we have been passing through in this place for several weeks. The Spirit has been poured out, not like a 'rushing mighty wind,' but like the soft dews and gentle rain, fertilizing and making glad our Zion. I had prayed for a blessing, and thought I had faith for my school as a grain of mustard-seed; but when the blessing came, I am not sure but I was as much astonished as the witch of Endor was, when Samuel himself actually appeared. Seven of my scholars give pleasing evidence of a change of heart, and three or four more attend the inquiry-meeting, but I cannot say that they are feeling deeply. I do not know of any conversions since the one I last mentioned, but Mr. H. tells me that two or three times, when he thought the interest had subsided, it seemed to revive and increase. I hope it will prove so again.

"Our meetings are full and solemn. Many

are interested who do not profess to be inquirers, and much fervent prayer has been offered for them. The desire seems to be that the work may go on unto perfection. With me God has been dealing in an unusual manner. I sing of mercy, and not of judgment. I have not felt that peculiar, intense excitement, which I am apt to feel on such occasions; but in some way—may I not attribute it to the Spirit?—have felt at morning, noon, and evening, a gentle drawing towards Christ. I have sinned every day, and many a dark cloud has appeared in my spiritual sky in consequence. But I have not felt so much cast down, that I could not look to the Lord and implore aid for another effort at resistance; and by his help I have gained some victories.

"I resolved when I came back to commence a careful study of the prophetical part of the Bible, with Scott, as I am in more ignorance of this portion than any other. In doing this, I think I have been blessed. I generally read two chapters a day, and as I could not well do this if I read the practical observations, I have chosen to omit them in going over it this time.

I suppose you would tell me that this is the very marrow of the reading; but my object is to get an understanding of the prophecies before entering the seminary, and must substitute other religious reading for this portion of Scott. I think, upon reflection, you would fall in with this plan. My closet devotions, though not of that rapturous kind that I have now and then enjoyed, have been continued feasts. I have felt a stronger faith in casting myself on God, in committing all my ways to him, and in believing that he will work out that which is good.

"I have made the path of duty in regard to teaching another year a special subject of prayer, and have prayed that if God wishes me to commence my preparation for the ministry next fall, he would make the way so plain that I cannot mistake it. I trust I shall experience no disappointment if the decision is to teach, but I desire to be about the great work to which I have devoted my life. I think I should now differ from some of the views which I expressed to you when at home, though I do not yet dare to say so. Some

habits of mine cling so close to me, that to tear them off is like taking away a part of my very self. Still, I am beginning to see the necessity of effecting a great work in these particulars, and I am making a very feeble beginning. I think I set a somewhat higher value on time than I did in 1845. I am trying to search my heart, and to distinguish animal feeling from true zeal, and a romantic piety from a sincere steady walk with God. Pray for me; for Satan desireth me, and my weak faith may fail. I am praying that all your doubts may be removed, and that you may come into perfect liberty."

In his journal while at Conway, his topics are the same as those in his letters—the state of religion in his own heart and in the community around him.

"April 13. I sometimes feel that I have no love for souls; I pray for dying sinners, I talk to them, but Oh, I do not have that love for them which many waters cannot quench nor floods drown. Last night and to-day wrote No. 6 of my loose papers.* I sometimes try

* Short addresses for social prayer-meetings.

this plan, as I am but little used to speaking *ex tempore*. I hope that the paper may be blessed when I shall make use of it.

"JUNE 10. Returned last Saturday from a visit of six weeks to my dear native home. I have enjoyed the society of beloved friends much, but 'have let my God, my Saviour, go.' I have neglected prayer and the Holy Bible, and have permitted my heart to go out after its own sinful vanities. Thus it is with me; in the daytime the drought consumes me, and by night the frost. O, when shall I be like Him after whom, I trust, my weary soul pants?

"SEPTEMBER 2. I have set apart this day as a day of special humiliation and prayer before the face of Almighty God, on account of my grievous backslidings and fearful wanderings from him during the past summer. I have indeed cast off fear and restrained prayer before him. So low have I sunk, that for a long season I have neglected secret devotion; and that too while I was urging its necessity upon others, and in the belief of those around me who are the disciples of Jesus, practising it

steadily myself. O the blackness of the human heart. O the depth of my depravity. Will the Lord be favorable any more? I will seek him yet again. I have read the ninth chapter of Daniel, and have looked away in prayer to Daniel's God. My first prayer has recounted God's mercies to me from infancy to the present moment; has spread out before him the long dark catalogue of my sins, and has implored his forgiving mercy through Christ. I have sought for the special manifestation of his face and favor to-day. I have also reviewed my journal, and find something written just ten years ago to-day. Would that I felt the love of God burning in my heart as I trust I did about that time. My second prayer was for strength to run with new vigor and alacrity the Christian race; that I might to-day give myself unreservedly to the Lord. And I humbly hope I did once more give myself away, in sincerity, in a new and everlasting covenant never to be broken, to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. My third prayer was, that I might have grace given me to continue in well-doing, that I might not be deceived in regard to my

hope, that I might be delivered from spiritual pride, and might be enabled to get the victory over those temptations which have heretofore hindered me in my journey heavenward. My fourth prayer was, that I might be enabled to live and act like a Christian, in the village in which I dwell; might do good in my school, and might be a lasting benefit to the members of my Sabbath-school class; also, that my labors in the conference-meeting might be blessed. My fifth petition was, a review of the petitions offered during the day, and a renewed committal of myself to Jehovah. God grant that it may not be in vain that this day has been set apart, but may his good Spirit rest upon and dwell with me now, henceforth, and evermore. Amen.

"Saturday, September 27, 1845. Another mile-stone in the journey of life has been reached. I am twenty-two years old. Eleven years ago to-day I wrote in my journal, 'I am eleven years old.' God only knows whether eleven years hence the hand that now pens these lines shall be mouldering in the grave, or whether it will be able to write, 'I am thirty-

three years old.' The uncertainty that attends it makes me solemn; would that it might keep me solemn. I have set apart the day as a day of special prayer, and my only purpose for the coming year is, *I will go on in the strength of the Lord God.*

"DECEMBER 21. The Lord has been pouring out his Spirit upon this place during the last two months, and in a still manner has, we trust, called about twenty souls from darkness to light. Among the number are several of my scholars, who seem to give good evidence of a change of heart. But O, how insensible am I to the goodness of God!

'Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall.'

"JANUARY 1, 1846. 'Thus far the Lord hath led me on;' and here would I make mention of his goodness, and with the new year resolve in the strength of God, and record my determination to live for him. What scenes await me during this year, God only knows. This much I know, that during the past year I have not attained unto perfection. But I believe I have a closer walk with God, and have

an assurance in my own soul that I am his. I am convinced that there is such a thing as walking with God day by day. I am tired of this fitful religion, this spasmodic piety. I am determined to entreat God every day to let me live with him and for him. The year which has just closed has been a year of unbroken mercies. Every day has found me in the possession of life, health, food, raiment, friends, and innumerable mercies. Every Sabbath has found me in the house of God; and above all, the close of the year has found me in the midst of a precious revival of religion, and my school is sharing largely in the blessing. O, have I not reason to be thankful? Have I not abundant occasion to say, 'I will go on in the strength of the Lord?' O, my heavenly Father, I desire to begin the new year in thy service, and whether I live to complete all its months and weeks and days on earth, or whether during its fleeting course I am summoned by thee to an unending state of existence, may I still be found in the glorious employment of loving and serving thee.

"Sabbath, January 18. Have been very

dull and lifeless in the sanctuary; but this evening have enjoyed a delightful season of prayer, committing myself to that God whose I am, and whom I believe I desire to serve. Satan, for a day, has had the advantage; but, by the grace of God, his reign shall be short, and

> 'A feeble saint shall win the day,
> Though death and hell obstruct the way.'

God has worked wonders in my school. Seven or eight are indulging a hope, and appear to give good evidence of a change of heart. To the Lord be all the glory, and may the work be carried on by him.

"JANUARY 25. Last night went out with some of my Christian brethren about four miles, to attend a prayer-meeting at the house of a good mother in Israel, now ninety-two years of age. Had a delightful season with the old pilgrim, and felt that I was standing by one who would soon stand near the throne of God. The snow was deep and the road much obstructed, but the Lord made a way for us, and we felt his love burning in our hearts. To-day (Sabbath) was feeble in mind in the sanctuary, but

at our evening conference had unusual freedom, though I hesitated about going, for I felt as if I could not say a word. I hope I shall not mistrust my God again. Was much comforted when I returned from meeting in opening the Bible, and accidentally casting my eye on Jeremiah 1 : 4–9.

"FEBRUARY 4. My heart was cheered to-day by a proposal from one of my scholars, to have those who had lately become interested in the subject of religion hold a meeting for prayer during the intermission at noon. They held one after the exercises this afternoon. The Lord grant that they may be long continued. Have enjoyed a blessed season this evening in closet devotion, and think I have felt in some measure that there is nothing worth living for but Christ, and nothing true but heaven. O that I might always feel thus.

"FEBRUARY 7. Finished this evening a fresh perusal of the life of Harlan Page. O how much he was permitted to do for God. And why may not I do as much? I almost shudder as I ask myself the question, and contrast my sinful life with his humble walk with

God, and my poor selfish efforts with his self-denying, sin-renouncing, God-glorifying labors. Why should I not lead such a life, and attain to such a communion with God? O, my blessed Saviour, it is not because thou dost not draw me by the tender cords of thy love, but because I will not run after thee.

"FEBRUARY 15. Have been reading to-night the life of Mrs. Judson. One remark of hers particularly struck me. 'I have always found that full employment of time, and much retirement from company of every description, is the grand secret of living near to God.'

"FEBRUARY 22. The week just past has been one of great excitement, and I have mingled much with the world. I have proved the *converse* of the remark made by Mrs. Judson, which I penned one week ago, to be true; that little employment of time, and frequent mingling with company of every description, is not the way to live near to God. I long to be so devoted to the service of God, that mingling with the world when I must, will not have such a tendency to make me forgetful of prayer and other religious duties. O Lord, while I am

in the world, keep me from the evil of the world."

Mr. Emerson found it improving to his own mind, as well as beneficial to others, to write his thoughts in the form of short addresses, which he presented in substance in the social prayer-meetings. It was difficult for him to speak extempore, and yet he had a strong desire to do his part towards rendering the social meeting interesting and profitable.

Several of these "loose papers," as he termed them, are preserved, from which we select the following:

"THE PATH OF THE JUST AS THE SHINING LIGHT.

"'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' I have been struck with the many points of resemblance between the true Christian and the 'shining light,' and will notice some of them. The Christian and the shining light may be compared together in the *beginning* of their course. The rising of the one has been preceded by a night of darkness

and gloom. But, anon, a faint streak is discerned in the eastern horizon; it is the harbinger of approaching day. And lo, the morning cometh. The bright 'king of day' makes his appearance over the eastern hills, gladdening the face of the earth and drinking up the dew which has collected during the darkness. So is it with the Christian. His conversion succeeds a long dark night of sin. But the 'Sun of righteousness' rises in his heart, chases away that darkness, drinks up the tears of penitence which have begun to fall, and imparts joy and gladness.

"The Christian and the shining light may be compared together in their *progress*. The sun does not stay on the eastern hills, but mounts up, and *up*, and *up* the blue pathway of the sky. So the light, joy, peace, and love which the Christian experiences at the beginning of his course, are but a foretaste of what he shall enjoy hereafter. The little rills of peace and comfort which now trickle into his soul, shall increase until they swell to a deep, broad river. His light 'shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'

"The Christian and the shining light may be compared together in the *joy* which each imparts at its approach. Animate and inanimate nature rejoices at the approach of the sun. The birds herald his coming. The fields and woods delight to bathe themselves in sunshine; the beasts show signs of gladness, and man goeth forth to his labor, and exclaims, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy goodness.' So is it at the approach of the truly good man. Prattling childhood runs out to meet him and receive his benediction. Vigorous manhood suspends its labor to do him reverence as he passes, and old age totters up to ask his blessing and receive his cheering smile.

"Again, the Christian and the shining light may be compared in their diffusive *benevolence*. The sun shines with equal warmth upon the 'gold-clad emperor of the palace, and the rag-clad beggar of the ditch.' It sheds a flood of glory into the spacious banqueting-hall, whose inmates are 'clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day,' and darts a

beam of light into the dark, under-ground hovel, where hollow-eyed want and gaunt famine reign triumphant. Here goes out a sower with a full seed-basket, scattering abroad its contents with a lavish hand; and there comes the poor man, casting in here and there of his small portion; and the same sun shines upon it with its warming and vivifying beams, causing it to spring up and grow, and in due time they both shout the abundant harvest home. Now take the devoted Christian. He has a look of love, a smile of joy, and a tear of sympathy for all. Are any rejoicing in the abundant goodness of God, manifested towards them? He rejoices also. Are any bowed down by deep and severe affliction? In all their afflictions he is afflicted. Are any drawing near to 'the dark valley of the shadow of death?' He hastens to the bedside of the sufferer, holds out the consolations afforded by the gospel, whispers words of Christian kindness into the ears of the mourning friends, wipes the cold death-damp from the brow of the sufferer, closes the glazed eye, and hands the departing spirit gently over to the angels who have come to bear it home.

"Once more, the Christian and the shining light may be compared together in their *departure*. We have a sure belief that we shall see them again. Suppose it were announced to-night that the glorious sun would set for the last time, and we should behold his bright disk no more for ever; how should we assemble on all these hills to watch his decline, and run from peak to peak to catch his last lingering rays; and when the latest one had faded into darkness, with what bursting sorrow should we grope our way to our homes in the darkness, never more to be cheered by the blessed light and warmth which had heretofore been to us almost as life itself. But far otherwise is the case. Even if we see the sun go down behind the darkened west, we expect to see it reappear on the coming day, clothed in new beauty, 'rejoicing like a strong man to run a race.' How inconsolable, too, would be our grief, if, when standing in 'the chamber where the good man meets his fate,' we should feel that he was about to pass away for ever from our sight. But we mourn not as those that have no hope. We are assured that our brother

shall live again. We know that he is only putting off this corruptible, in order that he may put on incorruption. We know that there is a natural body that waxeth old and vanisheth away; while we know, also, that there is a spiritual body that never fadeth. 'They come not up,' says one who went down in the freshness of life's morning to the dampness of the tomb, 'they come not up in the great day, rusty and time-worn, from their tabernacles of clay, or congealed and dripping from their cold, dark bed in the ocean. Blessed be God, there is a spiritual body.' As the sun in his going down gives a sure pledge of his glorious return, so the righteous, in his death, gives promise that he shall live again."

"GROWTH IN GRACE.

"We are commanded to 'grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' How few of us there are who give the command any attention; how many who do not bestow on it a passing thought. Are we not too apt to feel that we 'have already attained, or are already perfect,'

when we come out and publicly profess ourselves on the Lord's side; and are we not satisfied if we thenceforward keep ourselves from the reproach of the world, and avoid bringing dishonor on our profession? But is this growing in grace? Is this advancing in the divine life? Let us apply the test elsewhere. Would you call the product of that field valuable, in which the seed planted should spring up far enough to show that it had been planted; and then, uninfluenced alike by the genial sunbeam and the refreshing shower, cease to grow? Would you deem that tree valuable, which, though it blossomed year after year, never brought forth fruit to perfection? Would you deem that man wise in worldly matters, who, when he might be constantly adding to his wealth, should consent to live possessed of barely enough to keep him from starvation? Would a parent send his son, day after day, and week after week, to school, if he found that he was making no progress in knowledge? O no. You call your harvest valuable, only when there has appeared, 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the

ear.' You call only that tree good which, after the glory of its blossoming is over, daily continues to show its enlarged fruit, until it is weighed to the earth with its goodly burden. You call that man worldly-wise, who leaves no measure untried, nor stone unturned, to add to the wealth he already possesses. You retain your child at school, that he may increase in knowledge, and become better fitted for the active duties of life. But how much the reverse of this is the Christian life. How many do no more than blossom here. A very few, praised be God, grow in grace, become ripe, and bear mellow fruit, that is constantly ready to be plucked by the owner of the vineyard. But the great majority of the church blossom, yet bring forth no fruit. You see them every two months at the communion-table; and here they may be said to blossom, for here they show to the world their profession. But they go away and return only to blossom again. Or if they do bear some fruit, so knotty and deformed is its appearance, so sour and crabbed to the taste, that it is not worth the plucking; and then it clings so to the tree on which

it grew, and to the stem which supports it, that it would seem far better to let it perish in its deformity, than to attempt to gather it in with the good fruit.

"My brethren, in the figure which I have used, I have too nearly described my own case. Have I not described yours? And if so, is it right that we should be in such a condition? Since in matters of the lowest importance we deem the law of progress to be essential, why should it not apply also to matters of infinite moment? If, then, our condition is such as I have described, ought we not to be awake to it? Could we occupy a fixed position, our condition might be less dangerous; but it is a fearful thought that this cannot be. If we are not growing in grace, then we are retrograding; for Christ says, 'He that is not with me is against me,' and it cannot be that we are with Christ unless we are constantly growing like him. If, now, we are convinced of the importance of growing in grace, the question comes, How shall we? Surely not by inactivity, for we have just seen that inactivity works out no good, but only destruction. Can

we grow in grace by resolving to grow in grace? What would you think of an army of men that came to batter down the walls of a city, and should spend their whole time in making huge engines to break down the ramparts, and yet never advance to make use of them? Yet this is just the case with some Christians. They spend all their time in making resolutions, and most powerful resolutions they make; enough, if only put in execution, to make great havoc with their sins, and push themselves far onward in the Christian course. But they make no use of them, they only treasure them up; and I very much fear, that at the Judgment some will have nothing to offer but a storehouse of good resolutions laid up while on earth, any one of which, if put to its proper use, might have been of signal service to them in their journey heavenward. The growing Christian does not stop to make many resolutions. He breaks down a great deal of the wall with very small engines, and for the simple reason that he keeps constantly at work. My brethren, we have no time to spend in sharpening our weap

ons. They must be kept in order by constant use. We cannot always stop to polish our arrows, and make them ready upon the string. We must often twang the bow, and shoot at a venture. It may be that some one of the King's enemies will be smitten. Up, then, and be doing. Depending on the promised strength of Jehovah, the most feeble need not fear."

"THE RAINBOW ROUND THE THRONE.

"In the glowing description given by John, of the view which he was permitted to take of the glories of the upper world, he makes use of this expression: 'There was a rainbow round about the throne.' Why, we may be permitted to ask, should the rainbow be chosen above all other things to mark the place where the 'Ancient of days' sits enthroned? What peculiar significance in the rainbow? Has it a deep meaning which nothing else possesses? Does it contain a language that will make the throne eloquent when all besides is dumb? Why not have a sun, all radiant with celestial light? Why not have a

moon, girt about with the silvery-shining, 'trailing garments of the night?' Why not have one of those bright, beautiful stars, 'first in night's diadem?' Will none of these answer? No, says John, 'There was a rainbow round about the throne.' Do you recollect the account recorded in the Scriptures, of the time when God poured out the floods of his wrath upon a guilty world, and swept off all its inhabitants, save the chosen eight, who, seated in the ark which they had built by divine command, rose as high towards heaven as the haters of God sunk beneath his frown? And do you remember, when the waters had subsided and the ark rested on mount Ararat, that the Almighty stood by Noah as he stepped forth on dry land, and lifting his finger towards the retreating clouds on which the sun had again broke forth, said, 'Behold my bow! I have set it in the cloud; it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and thee?' Here, then, is its deep significance made manifest; here its hidden mystery declared. In this consists its wondrous fitness for the place it occupies; it is a token of the covenant be-

tween God and man. Bright token. Who does not love to gaze upon it? Who has not seen, on some fair summer's morn, the dark clouds rearing their caps in the western horizon, and heard the muttering of the distant thunder, and noted the gleam of the lightning, and watched the dense masses as they rolled up in awful majesty, obscuring the light of the sun and shrouding the earth in funereal gloom? And when the tempest swept by in its wrath, threatening to repeat the desolation of the old world, have you not remembered the token of the covenant, and felt sure that that bright token would soon be hung out in heaven? And was it not so? When the storm had gone over your head, did you not see, spanning its dark brow, the bright, the beautiful, the seven-colored bow of promise? Was there not a rainbow round about the cloud? And is it not a fitting emblem for Jehovah to throw around his throne? Shall we not do well to gaze upon it and study its meaning and read its language? Especially would the Christian do well to take heed to it; for it is to him a token of a Father's care, a Father's love, a Father's undying remembrance.

"Doubting Christian, it has a language for thee. Are you sometimes almost led to believe that the promises of God will fail of their fulfilment, and that he has forgotten to be gracious? Behold that bow. It is a token of his unfailing love, and assures you that though a woman may forget her first-born, yet he cannot be forgetful or unmindful of thee. Tempted Christian, have the allurements of an insnaring world and the temptations of the great adversary at times almost obtained the victory? Remember the token. The evil one shall not gain the advantage, for the Lord knoweth how to deliver those that are tempted.

"Afflicted Christian, have all the waves and the billows of the Almighty gone over you, and have you been compelled, in the bitterness of blasted hopes, to exclaim, 'Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness?' O can you not see woven into the bright colors that compose that bow the glorious promise of your Lord, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee?'

"Dying Christian, we have no need to tell you that there is a rainbow round about the throne. How gorgeous its colors and distinct its outline, as you draw near the pearly gates of the celestial city. But when you have arrived there, behold, it 'melts away into the light of heaven.' For what need of the token, when He who gave it has made himself to stand in its place, and has taken you to be for ever in his blissful presence."

"HE IS JOINED TO HIS IDOLS; LET HIM ALONE.

"There are doubtless many persons who have sinned away their day of grace, and against whom that terrible edict has gone forth, 'He is joined to his idols; let him alone.' There is a point beyond which the long-suffering patience of God will not go; there is a time when his mercy is clean gone for ever, and when he will be favorable no more. The Spirit of God strives long, but will not strive always, with men. The promises and threatenings of the word of God may for many years address themselves to the conscience, but there is a time when they will 'neither melt nor move.' There

is such a thing as being given up of God, left to hardness of heart and blindness of mind, never more to be visited by the Spirit, never more to have any concern for the never-dying soul; sinking into that deep, unconscious sleep, from which it is impossible to be aroused, until the 'worm that never dies and the fire that never is quenched' have begun to prey upon the soul. In what awful language does the Scripture clothe itself, when speaking upon this point: 'Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.' This state of mind is induced by continually resisting the strivings of God's Spirit; by lulling the voice of conscience; by running into temptation; by efforts to put to sleep the convictions attendant upon the faithful ministrations of the sanctuary; by restraining prayer; by putting off to a more convenient season the thoughts of death, the judgment, and eternity. It is not a state of mind peculiar to those who dwell in the darkness of heathen-

ism, or to those who have been nourished in the midst of crime and infidelity. If it is peculiar to any, it is to those who have been brought up under the sound of gospel truth, who have lived in the full blaze of gospel light, who have had line upon line, counsel upon counsel, warning upon warning, and that Sabbath after Sabbath, year after year. But all have been disregarded, or put off to that fatal period, to-morrow. And now the man has been given over to destruction, and in reference to him it may be truly said, 'There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.' O, if there is one of God's creatures upon whom it is heart-rending to look, surely it is that person who has sinned away his day of probation; who is permitted to continue a little longer on the earth, and yet dead—a corpse among living men. How it would surprise us to see one of those forms which we have lately deposited in yonder graveyard, suddenly start up, endowed with the power of motion alone, and going forth among us. How frightful to know that the principle of life would never enter it again, and yet it is walking by our side in the street,

sitting down at our tables, and touching with its skeleton hand, but not tasting the food we have prepared, and lying down by our side at night. How terrible to see the flesh dropping daily from its bones, and to know that it would never be clothed anew, and that no breath of the Lord would ever breathe upon it again. But just such is the condition of the person we are describing. The silver cord that bound the soul to a Redeemer's love has been loosed, the golden bowl of salvation has been broken, and yet by a mysterious providence he is permitted to stand a little longer a monument of the divine displeasure, a cumberer of the ground, a tree riven with the red thunderbolt, waiting only to be cut down and burnt with devouring fire. Nothing now will, or can affect him. So often has he been pierced by the sword of the Spirit, that there is left no place where a wound can be inflicted: you may preach to him the most alarming discourse, and it will not move him; you may set before him the glorious hopes and promises of the gospel, or you may array the awful threatenings and denunciations of the Almighty before him, and

he will be unaffected. The pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday, have no terrors for him. A thousand may fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand, but no tear of penitence moistens his eye. The thunders of Sinai peal over his head, but he hears them not; the lightnings of divine wrath flash full in his face, but he sees them not; the smoke of the bottomless pit rolls up, and wreathes its thick volumes around him, but he heeds it not; he waits only for death to come and assign him his portion in a world of despair."

"FAST, FOR THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT.

"One of the most interesting and fervent prayers which is recorded in the word of God, is that put up by Habakkuk the prophet. 'O Lord,' he says, 'revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath, remember mercy.' Who that has ever read this prayer can doubt that it was offered up with 'strong crying and tears,' with a deep sense of the need of the blessing which was sought, with a strong

feeling of dependence, with humble boldness, and with an earnest expectation of a speedy answer? How appropriately might the prophet offer up his prayer if he were present with us to-day, and how agonizing his supplication would be, could he look abroad on the desolations of our Zion. But he sleeps with his fathers, and who is there to stand up for him, and using his language to cry with his faith, 'O Lord, revive thy work?'

"Let us consider some of the reasons why this prayer is so peculiarly applicable to us on the present occasion, and why the earnest expression of the prophet should be used at this time by every member of this church. First, on account of the apathy manifested by most professing Christians in the cause of Christ. We may not have committed outbreaking sins; we may not have run riot, like others, and been guilty of all manner of excess; on the contrary, we may have seemed to our fellow-disciples to be 'growing in grace,' and to the impenitent to be consistent, devoted men. But let us come closer home than this. What say our consciences in regard to some known, well-

beloved sin? Has it been indulged when no eye saw us, no ear heard us, and no lips approached us? Ah, is not the name of our sins legion, and have we not occasion to say, as they rise up before us, 'I do remember my faults this day?' What say our closets? O, could the walls of that neglected spot speak out, would they not cry against us? Would they not exclaim, in regard to day after day, and perhaps of week after week, Deserted, *deserted?* Would they not bear witness to lukewarm petitions, to longings after earthly good, to an earnest desire to depart, and be *not* with Christ, but with the world? What says our seat in the social prayer-meeting? Vacant, *vacant;* or, if there, spell-bound, tongue-tied, ashamed to say a word for our Master, for fear, perhaps, that we had not a gift to speak, or for some other equally frivolous reason. What say our impenitent neighbors and friends? One says of a professor, 'He seems to be confident that he has found a pearl of great price, but he never invited me to share it with him. I hear him tell at times of the danger of continuing in sin, but he

never warned *me* to flee from that danger.' Do not these things testify to our shame, and is there not abundant need, in view of them, to put up the prayer, 'O Lord, revive thy work?'

"This prayer is needed, because few come up to Zion's solemn feasts. Every day is diminishing the numbers in the ranks of the sacramental host of God's elect, and none are found to fill their places. The standard-bearers in Zion's army begin to faint, and no one is ready to relieve them. What means the astounding fact, that the deaths and dismissions in the Congregational churches in this state, have exceeded by several hundreds the additions to them, during the past year? O, is not this fact a loud call upon us to put up the united prayer, 'O Lord, revive thy work?'

"We need to offer this petition, because precious souls are daily going down to eternal death. Those with whom we take counsel from day to day, with whom we walk and converse, and are on terms of the closest intimacy, are among the number of those whose 'steps take hold on hell.' And without the

converting influences of God's Holy Spirit, they must for ever perish. Can we see and know this, and yet remain unaffected? Can we delay another hour crying out, with the earnestness of one who will take no denial, 'O Lord, revive thy work?'

"Once more, we need to offer up this prayer, because 'now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' Brethren, every day is carrying us onward towards our heavenly home. Do we realize this? Do we believe that the 'beatific vision' shall soon break in upon us; that the songs of the redeemed shall soon strike upon our ears; that we shall, ere long, be of that white-robed company that 'follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth?' And have we done all that we could wish to do before that time arrives? Then call mightily upon God. Like the voice of a trumpet, waxing louder and louder, put up the earnest, believing prayer, 'O Lord, revive thy work.'"

CHAPTER V.

CONNECTION WITH PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

1846—1849.

The time had now arrived for Mr. Emerson to enter upon the last stage of his disciplinary course, preparatory to the work of the ministry. His views respecting the importance of a thorough preparation of mind and heart for this sacred profession, were clear and correct. Especially at the present day, when so much is required of the minister of the gospel in the various departments of philanthropic effort, Christian benevolence, and literary and scientific research, he felt that it was only by great diligence and labor that he could be qualified for so responsible a station.

Those who imagine that the life of a theological student is one of indolence or ease, or that there is any inherent power in a seminary to fit him for his profession, independent of personal toil, are greatly mistaken. The science of theology itself is sufficient to tax the

student's powers to their utmost, and well may he exclaim, as he looks over the field of theological truth, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But there are many other branches which he should not neglect. He must be in some degree familiar with the literature of the day. He must keep up with the progress of scientific discovery. He must be able to meet the most subtle forms of scepticism, and be supplied with weapons with which to defend "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Mr. Emerson entered Princeton Theological Seminary August 27, 1846. On the following day he gave his friends his first impressions of his new residence.

"Dear Parents—Having been duly admitted a member of the Theological seminary in this place, having obtained a room, and considering myself settled for at least nine months, I sit down to fulfil my promise of writing you the full particulars of my journey, arrival, and reception among this people."

After giving a minute account of his journey, and his efforts to obtain a room, he adds,

"Not knowing who the family were, I felt

a little anxiety, the first night, about security; but when I heard a psalm read in the other room, and the voice of prayer, I felt quite secure, and thought of the lines,

> 'Prayer can force a passage through
> Iron bars and brazen gates.'

From the windows of my room I can see distinctly the buildings of Princeton college, or Nassau Hall as it is generally called, five in number, and all beautiful buildings. They are about half a mile from the seminary. The seminary building is a fine one of stone, and the picture of it, with the large yard in front, is a good representation. The library building, in front of the seminary, is very beautiful. It is purely of the Gothic order, with large stained windows, variegated marble floor, large apartments for books, and every thing in beautiful proportion. There are many fine residences in Princeton, with extensive and beautiful flower-gardens in front, and abundance of shrubbery. I was agreeably disappointed in the town.

"There is a feeling of kindness among the students here which is very gratifying. It is not like college, where all seek their own.

There are no class distinctions; all sit together, and walk and talk together, and you feel that every one is your friend. There are none of Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, but all seem to be of Christ. All are pious. They feel friendly towards the professors, who are just what they profess to be, and apparently just what they ought to be. They love the students, and the students honor them, and it is indeed a lovely seminary. Our class will number, I suppose, about fifty.

"SABBATH, AUGUST 30. This is my first Sabbath in Princeton, and it has been a beautiful day. You will want to know something of the order of exercises. At nine o'clock in the morning the students meet for prayer by colleges; that is, the graduates of a college meet as such, to pray for their own college. As Mr. T—— was not here, we of Amherst did not meet to-day, but probably shall hereafter. I think there are but four here from Amherst, and three of us have but just come. At eleven o'clock we assemble in the chapel for public worship. Dr. Alexander, senior, preached this morning a very able discourse.

It is the custom in all this region to have preaching morning and evening, and none in the afternoon. The Sabbath-school is usually held at that time. In place of preaching, we have at the seminary a very delightful exercise. All the students meet in a room called the 'Oratory,' at half-past three, with the professors, and hold familiar conversation on some topic given out on the previous Sabbath. All are invited to take part in it. The students first speak, and then the professors give their views. The topic to-day was, 'The proper feelings to be cherished by students on commencing a new session of study.' Those who speak remain seated, as if in a room conversing together. It was very pleasant to listen to the paternal counsel of the professors, and to notice the deep interest they seemed to take in our welfare. We are all candidates for the gospel ministry, and as such they addressed us.

"How different is this from college. There are none disorderly here, no disturbance, all have one aim and one end in view, and that a holy one. The topic for next Sunday is, 'Self-knowledge; its importance and the means of

attaining it.' In the evening the students attend church, if they choose, at Dr. Rice's. I shall go this evening. You perceive by the arrangement of our meetings, that I have ample time to meet you at noon at a throne of grace. I took one o'clock to-day. This is most convenient, as it comes soon after dinner. I shall try always to improve it. It would gratify me much if our friends Mr. and Mrs. M—— could also join us at that hour. You know I need special prayer now. To-day, when my imagination went rapidly over the long distance that intervenes between us, and I thought of the dear parents and friends whom I love so much, and who love me so much, I longed to be with you. But I knew that duty and God were here, and here I hope to feel willing to stay my appointed time."

Soon after becoming settled, he made the following records in his journal:

"PRINCETON, N. J., Aug. 30, 1846.

"In the good providence of God I am now a member of the Theological seminary here, and this is my first Sabbath in this place. I desire to record God's goodness to-day in so

signally preparing the way for me to come here, and raising up so many friends for me. In the expectation of spending three years in this place, if God should spare my life, and looking back with regret on my misspent time and opportunities in college, I desire before God to-day to make the two following resolutions, which I pray God Almighty to enable me to keep. Resolved,

"1. Never to neglect, while connected with this institution, the duty of reading the Scriptures, and of secret prayer morning and evening.

"2. Not to neglect one regular recitation or lecture when it is in my power to attend.

"Sabbath, September 13. I have now been here three Sabbaths, and God has been pleased to bless me with continued health and strength, and enabled me to commence with zeal the studies of this institution. Thus far also I have been enabled to keep the resolutions which I made at the commencement of my course, and the Lord being my helper, I design still to keep them. I have been permitted to-day to go to the table of the Lord, and renew my

covenant with him to be for ever and entirely his. I desire to make record of the deed. I give myself to the Lord: I desire to be only his. O Lord, make me what thou wouldst have me to be, and prepare me especially for the great and solemn work of the gospel ministry, to which I have devoted my life.

"SABBATH, SEPTEMBER 27, 1846. Again has returned the anniversary of that day which I desire always to keep as a day of devout thanksgiving to God for his past mercies, of unfeigned sorrow for sin, and humble supplication for mercies in time to come. It is the anniversary of my birthday. I am now twenty-three years old. As I make this record from year to year, I know not that I shall ever be spared to make it again. But God yet keeps me in being, and shows forth his mercy towards me, though a rebel against him. I have just heard of the death of one of my class-mates in Amherst college, who graduated in 1844 with much honor. I think he is the first of that class who has been called away since we left that institution. Why was not I the one taken? O Lord, thou only knowest.

"I have this morning reviewed my journal, and find reason to bless God that he has enabled me to write in such a manner that I can trace the most important events of my life from the time I was ten years old until now. And I hope to continue this record, that it may give me occasion, in time to come, to sing of mercy, and review the waymarks of my course until time with me shall be no more. The past has been a year of mercies. My friends have been spared, and my own health continued. God I believe has clearly pointed out the path which has led me to this seminary; and now, just as I commence my twenty-fourth year, and about six years from the time of entering college, I am permitted to enter upon a course of theological study. I desire renewedly to consecrate myself to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to express once more my firm and hearty belief in the religion of Jesus Christ as set forth in the holy Scriptures, to renew the resolutions which I made at the opening of the present session of study, and to implore divine assistance and the guiding and illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit in time to come.

"O Lord, make thy face to shine on thine unworthy servant, and prepare him to do and suffer all thy will here and glorify thee hereafter."

To his Parents.

"September 29, 1846.

"I wish you could hear some of our preaching. Last Sunday we had a very able sermon from Professor A—— on the argument for the Scriptures from prophecy. I thought it unanswerable. I used to fear that when I came to the Theological seminary, I should have my faith very much tried in regard to some doctrines of the Bible that I had received in childhood without proof, such as the divinity of Christ, etc. But I find that the very reverse of this is thus far true. The proofs in favor of our holy religion, and the doctrines of the gospel, as I received them in the closet and Sabbath-school in childhood, multiply upon me every day. And when I see our excellent and learned professors of one mind, men of prayer, and meekly sitting at the feet of Jesus, I cannot but feel that there is a power in the doctrines of the cross that can be found nowhere

else. My opinion now is, that you should instruct a child in the doctrines of the gospel, and let him take them on trust until he is able to examine them for himself. There is no fear of the result.

"It is very pleasant to hear, as I do, the voice of prayer morning and evening ascending on all sides of me. I feel as if I was doubly guarded from evil. I generally rise about half-past five, and spend the time before prayers and breakfast in devotional exercises and reading in my Greek Testament. After breakfast I walk a mile or two, and also after supper. In the evening I am in the habit of reading in the Old Testament, and meditating upon its great truths. I am now again reading Paley's Evidences of Christianity. I am reading also Dr. Chalmers' works in course, and some of Stephens' Travels again. I write out in separate books four courses of lectures, and read on subjects connected with them. We have a great deal of writing to do. Every thing goes on prosperously. I have had a peculiar visitation of the Spirit, in some respects remarkable and differing from what I ever had before. I

think I never have had such strength imparted to me from above as now. My times of prayer are seasons of great delight, especially on Sabbath noon. I have prayed with new zeal for Samuel, and intend to write to him on the subject of his soul's salvation this very week. I wish I could have a long, long talk with you. How much I would say. But I think of you often, and pray for you at least twice every day."

In October he continued his journal.

"October 11. I find it profitable to devote the first portion of my time in the morning to prayer, praise, and reading the sacred Scriptures. This is due to my Creator, as being the time generally when the mind is most vigorous and active; and moreover, it is the most fitting time in which to return thanks to Him who has watched about my pillow and shielded me from harm. The second portion of my time I think proper to devote to exercise, in order that I may enter with vigor and success upon the studies in which I am engaged, that if I have granted me '*sana mens*,'* I may

* A sound mind.

have it '*in sano corpore*.'* The third portion I devote to study, reading, attendance on recitations, lectures, etc. By the blessing of God, I am now making some progress in the Hebrew language; commenced translating yesterday the first chapter of Genesis. I am also attending four courses of lectures weekly, and writing notes on them. I read the New Testament in Greek in the morning, and at evening the Old Testament in English, in connection with the course of lectures on biblical history.

"October 20. Last evening had a delightful interview with Dr. Scudder, missionary from India. He came into the Oratory and attended prayers, after which he took each of the students by the hand, and presented them with a little book he had just published, entitled 'The Redeemer's last Command.' It was an affecting meeting, and God grant it may be productive of much good.

"October 25. Read to-day the little book referred to above with deep interest, and trust that I shall not be unmindful of its appeal. I hope that my desire is neither to waver or

* In a sound body.

shrink from the call of duty as to my future situation. I have determined to-day to pray more earnestly for those before whom, in time past, I have set an unholy example, that they may all become devoted Christians, and be more consistent in their conduct.

"November 22. I set apart yesterday as a day of fasting and prayer, that I might be delivered from the dominion of my spiritual foes. God has been very gracious to me in giving me strength to resist them for a few weeks; but constant and renewed application will do me no harm, nor displease my heavenly Father.

"December 12. God continues to speak in thunder-tones, admonishing me of the shortness and uncertainty of life. Since I came to Princeton I have heard of the death of at least eight with whom I was once acquainted. One was a young man who was a class-mate with me during our four years' college course; another, a college friend mentioned under date of October 18th; two young ladies in Conway, one of whom was a pupil of mine during the last term that I kept school there, and who seemed at one time to have serious impressions,

which afterwards wore off; the old 'mother in Israel,' mentioned under date of January 25, and three young men of about my own age, who were formerly school-mates of mine. One died far from friends, of rapid consumption, in Calcutta; another, a midshipman, was drowned in the Gulf of Mexico. The third, a noble youth, perished in that fearful gale which wrecked the steamboat Atlantic in Long Island Sound, on her way from Boston to New York, the particulars of which are still fresh in our recollections, and the thought of the horrors of which still sends an electric thrill through my veins. Early their work has been accomplished, and they have passed into eternity. Lord, who shall go next? Is it I? Is it I? O, if it is, may I be found of thee in peace. May it be gain for me to die, and may I die in thine own time, and in thine own way. But when the hour comes, then, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

"DECEMBER 27. The last Sabbath in the year has come, and I am not in hell where I deserve to be, nor in heaven where I hope, finally, through the mercy of God, to be; but I am

yet on earth, in health and strength, and in the possession of all my faculties. I love to note time as it flies; to seize such occasions as the present to make mention of his loving-kindnesses to me, who hath loved me with an everlasting love, and to implore his favor in time to come.

> 'I love to think on mercies past,
> And future good implore.'

Had any one told me on the last Sabbath of last year, that to-day I should have stood within the walls of this seminary of learning, I should have been much surprised; but by God's help here I am. I made it at one time, during the first part of the year, a special subject of prayer that God would give me direction as to pursuing my theological course this year. I prayed that if he designed to have me go on immediately he would make it known to me, and show me by unmistakable signs what he would have me do. Others prayed for me, and God heard those prayers. I here record it for my future encouragement in seeking divine guidance—God heard those prayers.

"About the first of June many of my friends

felt an uncommon interest to have me come to this seminary. But I had no money to carry me through. Would the Lord 'make windows in heaven?' Yes, if need be. Behold, just at the expected moment, the Lord raises up one who lends me sufficient for my purpose. Many remarkable minor providences were connected with this affair. Can I doubt that the Lord's hand was in it? To doubt would be, I believe, an awful sin against God. I have a praying mother and praying friends, and the Lord has inclined my heart to prayer, and prayer is not in vain. I record it again, prayer is *not* in vain. What now doth the Lord require of me, but to keep his commandments and to love him with all my heart? Lord, I stand pledged to thy service for another year. Many times, during the past year, hast thou called me to note the death of those with whom I once associated. Shall any one mark mine down during the coming year? Or shall I be spared? If so, may it be to glorify thee, to grow in grace, to do good, to ripen for heaven and eternal glory. O let thy guiding hand be with me in time to come, as it has been in time past.

'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land:
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.'"

"April, 1847. It will require much study for me to prepare to feed acceptably a flock of God, of which I may have the oversight. The nearer I approach the ministry, the more I shrink from it. I once thought no man led an easier life than a minister. Aside from the awful responsibility of the sacred office, I now feel that a minister's labors are of no small account. While the Bible is a rich fund from which all may derive unlimited benefit, people will not long be satisfied with the barren generalities of unsanctified expounders of it. I believe it is only the deeply spiritual man who can look into its 'hidden mysteries,' and only the growing Christian minister who can continually bring forth out of this treasure-house 'things new and old.' If such men as Edwards, Whitefield, and Payson could exclaim, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' what must we, candidates for the same office, say,

whose gifts, faith, and knowledge, when compared with theirs, are 'less than the least.' I know, however, that despondency is the opposite extreme to spiritual pride, and I know also that God raiseth up men of low degree. Asahel Nettleton was a man not distinguished for his intellectual or scientific attainments, and yet of what a glorious host is he the spiritual leader.

> 'T is not a cause of small import
> The pastor's care demands,
> But what might fill an angel's heart,
> And filled a Saviour's hands.'

"I rejoice to learn, by your last, that there are so many indications for good in Newburyport. I trust that they will not, as heretofore, prove like the 'early dew that vanisheth away.' I should rejoice to come home and find you in the midst of a revival. I went out yesterday afternoon and spoke at a schoolhouse in Mapleton parish, in Kingston, a town adjoining this. The walk was about three miles. Mr. R. goes out every Sabbath afternoon, and teaches a Bible class at three o'clock, and speaks to a small congregation at four.

He invited me to go out with him and speak. The congregation was not quite as large as usual, on account of the day being cold and very windy. We took tea in a pleasant family, and returned before dark.

"JANUARY 10, 1847. I think I have derived comfort and spiritual nourishment to-day at the sacramental table. I feel as if I had met my God and Saviour, and as if I had touched the golden sceptre which he extended to me; as if I had preferred my petition, and received an answer of peace. Last evening, as I looked back on a week in which I had committed many and grievous sins, and as I looked forward to the celebration of the sacred supper, I hope my heart melted in penitence. I felt in an unusual degree the freeness and fulness there is in Christ, and my own vileness and helplessness. O that I may always feel thus. Lord, I make a new surrender of myself to thee. Take me, bless me, save me in thy everlasting kingdom."

"AUGUST 29. Through the abounding goodness of my God, I am brought to behold the first Sabbath of my second year in Princeton

Theological seminary. My heavenly Father is kind, very kind to me, and abundant in long-suffernig. I tremble to-day as I review the record I made on the first Sabbath of last year, and think how far I have come short. I tremble as I look forward to a new year, and think of its temptations and its dangers. I hope that I feel in some measure convinced that my strength is perfect weakness, and I trust that my desire is to lean only on the Lord Jesus for guidance and a blessing.

"To thee, O God, I renewedly dedicate myself, and all that I am and have.

"Upon thee, O Saviour, and upon thy precious atonement, I cast myself.

"Guide me, O Holy Spirit, and let me be led by thee, that I may become one of the 'sons of God.'

"I was permitted to return home in May, and enjoy many weeks in the pleasant society of my well-beloved parents and friends. Through the goodness of my heavenly Father, I am now in health permitted to commence the duties of a new session. May the Lord watch over those dear friends, while we are absent

one from the other. May my own life and health be spared, that I may meet them again, and rejoice with them in the goodness of our common God and Father.

"SEPTEMBER 12. Have been permitted to-day to go to the table of the Lord, and renew my covenant with him. O may I be for ever the Lord's. Have been exceedingly refreshed to-day, in reading anew a part of the life of that eminent man of God, Rev. Jeremiah Hallock. O Lord, I pray to have much of his devotedness in thy service.

"SEPTEMBER 17.

'Feed me, O Lord, with needful food:
I ask not wealth or fame;
But give me eyes to view thy works,
A heart to praise thy name.

'Oh, may my days obscurely pass,
Without remorse or care;
And let me for my parting hour
From day to day prepare.'"

"SEPTEMBER 19. Finished reading to-day, for the second time, the Life of Rev. J. Hallock. I think it, in many respects, the most spiritual memoir I ever read. O for some of

his faith and piety. O for his unshaken hope. O for a home with him where Christ is.

"SEPTEMBER 27. I am this day *twenty-four* years old. Another year of unbroken mercy and heavenly favor. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' Another year of indulgence in many sins, and scarcely any growth in grace. Be humbled, O my soul, in the dust on account of it. Must it always be thus, O Lord? Must every year be a record of spiritual leanness and barrenness? Am I never more to grow in grace? O, it cannot, it must not be. I think I do *desire* to be holier and more heavenly. Why, then, am I not so? 'Search me, O Lord, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' I feel conscious, I think, to-night, that I am a guilty sinner, deserving God's everlasting wrath and curse. If saved from the guilt of sin, it must be only by the precious blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. To that precious fountain I fly. 'Create in me a clean heart, O God.' Make me wholly thine, and thus prepare me to be the means of direct-

ing others to the Saviour. To thee I commit myself, O Lord, and all I am and have—my life, health, reason, parents, brothers, sisters, friends, my body and soul. Thou hast done great things for me in years past. O let a greater work, even the quickening of my soul, be done for me this year.

"To God only wise be glory, through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

"PRINCETON, (Sabbath, 2 o'clock,) Sept. 5, 1847.

"EVER DEAR MOTHER—At this consecrated hour I feel as if I must say a few words to you. I have just risen from my knees, where I have been endeavoring to pray fervently for my father and you, for myself, and for all the beloved members of our family. It is, my dear mother, a season peculiarly sweet. At this hour, ever since I can remember, have you led your beloved children to the throne of grace, and committed them to Him who hath said, 'I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.' The instructions you have given us at this hour will not be lost; 'in due season you shall reap.' Every prayer you have offered is remembered by our faithful God; every tear

you have shed is in his bottle; your heart shall be made glad. Oh, I seem to-day to feel it and know it. If I am cast out, our beloved Samuel will be brought in. But O, we must, *we must all* walk the shining streets of the new Jerusalem together."

"SABBATH-NOON, September 12, 1847.

"MY DEAR MOTHER—Again, at this hallowed hour, I sit down to hold converse with my dearest earthly friend. I do not deem it a profanation of the day thus to write, because I want to say to you just the things I would if I were present with you; and, now we are separated, this is our only means of communication. I love to have letters from you written at this hour. They seem to be of a more sacred character. I received your kind letter yesterday, and was, I trust, truly thankful that you had been brought safe home again, and were seated by your little desk to write to me. God was indeed kind to us during our long journey, both in sparing our lives and giving us such pleasant weather. I think we could not have selected out of the whole summer, five more favorable weeks than those in which we were absent.

"I agree with you that travelling is not the way to grow in grace. I presume you can say, now that you have returned to our dear home and your quiet Bethel, It is good for me to be here. I have often wished since my return that I was at least as near to you as Boston or Andover, where I could run in and see you sometimes; but then I have thought how plainly the path seemed marked out for me to come here, and in what ways of mercy God has dealt with me since I have been here: and shall I now run away, and that too without a sufficient cause? No. This, I think, would be to tempt God. Perhaps we are so situated, that we may love and think of each other more, and pray more for each other; and since I am such a dumb Zacharias about talking with you on spiritual things when we are together, we may, by writing, stir up each other's minds in holy and divine things.

"I begin to feel as if God had commenced a new work in my soul, and had given me some new views of the awful responsibility and sacredness of the gospel ministry. I have been led often since my return to ask my-

self the question, Why I have commenced preparing for the ministry? Is it because you wanted me to be a minister, or because I thought I could make the most of myself in that office, or was it without having any very definite end in view? If any or all these were my motives, O how unworthy am I of that great work. But I trust that these have not been my governing motives, though I fear that they have had too much influence. I pray God that they may not be the motives with which I shall eventually enter the office. I pray that nothing short of the one and all-absorbing desire to save precious souls, and thereby glorify God, may prompt me to become a minister. For this I desire to have you pray, and for this I mean to pray myself.

"I thank you for your good advice, and I think God has set forth some of my defects this summer more plainly to my own mind, and I trust he will give me strength to overcome them. There is a restlessness under reproof, and a severity in my manner when I am reproved, of which I am too often guilty. This I must try to overcome. Moreover, I am too

listless, and have too little self-confidence, and altogether too little of a self-denying spirit. These things I know as well as you; and to will to get rid of them is present with me, but how to perform I know not. Prayer only, I believe, will effect it. To this refuge, then, let me flee continually.

"We have been privileged to-day with another season of communion at the table of our Lord. My heart was cold and my affections not in lively exercise; still, I trust I did in some measure enjoy God in his house."

"October 31. I can hardly refrain from saying to you a few words on paper every Sabbath-noon, as you seem so peculiarly near to me. I love to think of you always, but especially on this blessed day, and at our hour of prayer. 'I have prayed for thee' to-day, my beloved mother, 'that thy faith fail not.' I have remembered your request made in your last letter, and what you said about the nearness of eternity and your feelings in view of it. If I felt better prepared myself for its solemn realities, perhaps I could afford you some more encouragement. Still, dear mother, un-

worthy as we are, and many and aggravated as are our sins, *Christ has died for us.* Here is our only hope. The importance of this blessed truth presses upon my attention more and more every day. We can do nothing, *absolutely nothing*, without it. In vain do we wash ourselves with snow-water and make ourselves ever so clean; without Christ we are plunged in the ditch, and our own clothes are made to abhor us. It is in vain that we look for comfort in animal excitement, and frames of mind, and religious feelings; these are all worthless. If we are without Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Mr. Emerson was licensed to preach the gospel on Wednesday, April 26, 1848, and on the next Sabbath, April 30, preached his first sermon in his native city. Before him were his nearest relatives and friends, the companions of his childhood, and many who had watched with deep interest his career, and the growth of piety in his soul. They now heard from his lips that gospel which was so precious to him, those sacred truths which he ardently

loved, and which had become incorporated into the very essence of his being. And they felt that "a man of God" was addressing them—that a messenger duly commissioned of heaven, clothed with ministerial authority by the great Head of the church, fitted for his work by the Holy Ghost, was addressing them. As they listened to his message, they could exclaim, with sincerity and earnestness, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation." His prayers, his discourse, his manner, earnestness, devotion, all showed that here was no false teacher, no mere formal declaimer of gospel truth; but an earnest messenger, to whom the ministry of Christ was a solemn reality, to whom the service of God was a delight, and one who felt the value of immortal souls.

But he had not preached long before he was reminded of his own frailty, and the uncertainty of all earthly hopes. In September he made the following record in his journal:

"Friday, September 1, 1848. After hav-

ing been permitted, in the good providence of God, to preach something more than thirty times, I was seized, on the first Sabbath in August, with a slight attack of raising blood, which was followed, during the week, by other attacks. These laid me aside from labor for two Sabbaths, but I preached half the day on the third Sabbath after I was taken. I am now in comfortable health again, and trust, if the Lord will, that I shall not have another attack of the disease, but be raised up to glorify him in the ministry of reconciliation. O, that this 'light affliction' may work out for me 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Have read with interest, recently, the Memoir of W. G. Crocker, missionary to Africa."

Mr. Emerson, after preaching as opportunities offered, with very great acceptance, returned to Princeton in December, to continue his preparation for his great work. On becoming settled, he resumes his journal:

"DECEMBER 17. Yesterday, through God's mercy, I again reached Princeton, and this is

the first Sabbath in my third year in this seminary. Though detained at home much beyond the time of the commencement of the session, I have abundant reason to bless Him who has returned me under circumstances of mercy; and to his kind care and watchful providence would I once again commit myself. The Lord watch between me and my friends while absent; and if I am spared to finish my course, may he direct me where to go, and aid me in endeavoring to build up his kingdom; and to his name shall be the praise.

"DECEMBER 26. Finished, to-night, Dr. Spring's 'Power of the Pulpit.' O, how great a work is that committed to a minister. How delightful; how interesting; how laborious; how responsible; how solemn; how fearful: God's ambassador, set 'to watch for souls as one that must give account.' What motives, drawn from three worlds, are there to induce him to be faithful. What guilt will rest upon him, if found unfaithful. I pray that the perusal of this interesting book may serve to deepen my sense of the responsibility of the work in which I am engaged, and lead

me to earnest endeavors in winning lost men to Him who has died that they might have life.

"JANUARY 14, 1849. The table of the Lord has been spread to-day, and his children have gathered about it. O, what will be our joy, if, when the ransomed of the Lord return, we shall be found meet for the table that shall be spread in heaven. Grant me, O my heavenly Father, so to live that I shall then be a partaker, with thy redeemed ones, of the manna and wine which thou dost give them. Have just observed my usual Sabbath-noon season of prayer for my dear parents, the members of our families, and other friends. This season my dear mother has observed with her children as far back as my recollection extends. Praise to God for pious parents, who have, in truth, brought me up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

"JANUARY 17. Finished reading to-day that wonderful book, 'Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.' This book, I think, ought to be often read by every Christian.

"JANUARY 23. This day has been set apart

by the members of this seminary, as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. The state of religion is low, and the love of the brethren has waxed cold. Yet God seems to be giving many of his children to-day a spirit of prayer and supplication, of penitence and humility. Who knoweth if he will not grant us a blessing? I think I have had a quickening of the Spirit recently, and have enjoyed more of the light of God's countenance. But sin often draws a veil, and hides me from him whom, I humbly hope, my soul loveth. O for grace to-day to forsake sin, and henceforth to cleave unto holiness. I am soon, if God spares my life, to go forth as an 'ambassador' in his name. O Lord, work mightily in me, that I may preach to others what I have myself experienced.

"FEBRUARY 4. This Sabbath has been one of the few which are a holy 'rest' unto my soul. I hope I have in some measure enjoyed God to-day, and been able to get near him in prayer. How sweet such days; and besides these, 'there remaineth a rest to the people of God.'

"FEBRUARY 11. This is communion-day at

the dear church with which I am connected in Newburyport. Thirteen years ago I was permitted to sit down for the first time at the table of our Lord with that beloved church. What an unworthy member have I been. I trust that I say this feelingly; for when God at times discovers to me the depravity of my own heart, as I think he has been recently doing, I find it to be a very sink of iniquity. O, none but God knows what a sinner I am. I feel to-day, that were it not for the rich mercy of God in Jesus Christ, I should be entirely undone. I have nothing to plead on my own behalf. I am nothing, and can do nothing. I flee to the fountain of thy blood, O thou incarnate God. Wash me; make me clean. Thou knowest that I would be thine. If saved at all, it must be wholly by thy blood and righteousness. Make me to do thy will on earth, and then take me to thyself in heaven to praise thee for ever.

"Tuesday, March 13. I have set apart this day as a day of special fasting, humiliation, and prayer, mingled with thanksgiving for past mercies. As I am so soon to go forth as a

minister of Jesus Christ, I feel that I have great need for prayer, fervent, constant prayer. I would this day seek the special presence and blessing of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Think upon me, O my God, this day for good. I have endeavored, in my morning devotions, to look for a blessing on the exercises of the day.

"Half-past ten, A. M. I have endeavored to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for past and present mercies. I have tried to thank God for early religious training and instruction—for God's grace, manifested in blessing the pious conversation of my mother to my awakening and, I hope, turning to God—for blessing to my special attention the second chapter of the book of Proverbs, which I have since called 'my chapter'—for the joy in God I often found even at that tender age (ten years old) in private devotion, in the reading of the Scriptures, in perusing religious books, and in assemblies for prayer and Christian conference. I have thanked him for having my attention called by a sermon of my pastor to the importance of making a public profession of religion—for being

permitted, after deliberation and advice with friends, to present myself as a candidate for admission to the church—for being accepted and propounded—for the opportunities of communion so frequently enjoyed—for strength to withstand evil companions—for preparation for college—for answers to prayer in being provided with a pious, discreet room-mate—for deliverance from evil companions and from backsliding, while connected with college—for being permitted to graduate with honor, in presence of my friends—for success in teaching, and for a revival of religion in my school—for an opportunity, specially in answer to prayer, to come to the Theological seminary—for a license to preach the everlasting gospel—for so many opportunities of proclaiming it—for the numerous manifestations of kindness by many friends—for deliverance from threatening sickness, and renewed health—for the Saviour, the Bible, the Sabbath, the way of salvation, and the hope of eternal life. These mercies I find to be 'more than the hairs of my head,' and 'as the sands of the sea innumerable.' I have noted down some of them as themes for grati-

tude and praise on other occasions, in connection with mercies yet in store.

"Twelve, M. Endeavored to confess my sins before God, and to seek forgiveness for Christ's sake. But how can I begin to recount the black and fearful catalogue? Original and actual sin—sins of omission and commission—sins against a most holy God—sins against my parents, my friends, companions, Christians, the church, the impenitent—against myself. O, they run parallel only with God's large and free mercies. Forgive these sins, O my heavenly Father, and impute not my iniquities unto me, but pardon me through the righteousness of thy dear Son.

"Half-past one, P. M. Have brought before God, in prayer, my particular sins, from which I desire to be delivered, and which have long had control over me, namely, sloth, an evil temper, the indulgence of vain and wicked thoughts, and my 'easily besetting sins.' These have taken fast hold upon me, and by some of them I have already been so far brought into captivity, that I know not that I shall be free again. But 'I can do all things through Christ,

which strengtheneth me.' O for strength, this day, to burst these more than iron fetters, and shake off these heavy yokes.

"Half-past three, P. M. Have tried to commit myself to God for the remainder of my term of study in this institution; praying that I may be enabled in thought, speech, and behavior to glorify him who hath hitherto helped me, relying on him alone for strength, and never feeling that I am sufficient of myself to keep myself. Lord, keep me ever mindful that all my sufficiency is of thee."

In the midst of our rejoicings over the near completion of our beloved brother's studies, we are saddened by the indications that his journal and letters give of the insidious workings of disease upon his system.

In February, after giving a minute account of the state of his health, he writes,

"I trust I have been more blessed than usual with the light of God's countenance and the visits of his love. I try to feel that I am wholly in his hands. I pray earnestly that I may live to preach the gospel, but hope to be

ready to say also, 'to die is gain.' I feel daily that I am a poor lost sinner, wholly dependent on the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. This feeling I desire to keep in lively exercise.

"To-day is the day of prayer for colleges. Our students meet by colleges at nine o'clock, and at eleven o'clock the professors meet us in a general meeting. I shall hope to have an account in your next of the observance of the day with you. I was interested in the account of the church fast, and should have been glad to have been with you on that day. I hope the dispensations of God's providence among you will be improved and blessed.

"Half-past two, P. M. Our meeting at eleven was quite interesting. The different colleges from which we came were called in alphabetical order, and reports of the state of religion presented from most of them. I hope the meetings have not been given up this year in Newburyport. I feel rejoiced that you have been so free from colds this winter as to be able to attend most of the meetings, and visit those who are sick.

"March 9. I am very grateful to you all for your kind remembrances of me, and only regret that I cannot make my own communications as interesting for you. You will be pleased to learn, that through divine goodness I am better than I was when I wrote you last. I took another cold; but it did not go to my lungs, and is now passing off. I have not yet as much vigor as I could desire; but as I do not have the labor of preaching this winter, hope to return in better health than when I went away.

"I have not been wholly idle since I returned; for, besides attending all the regular exercises but one, I have been through with one entire course of theology, one course of history, and have written about fifty letters, besides performing quite an amount of miscellaneous reading, and reviewing a large part of my studies for the two past years, in preparation for examination.

"When I think of myself as just ready to go forth into the great harvest-field, I almost shrink. But I feel confident that the Lord has bid me come thus far, and I cannot go

back. If he designs to put me into the ministry, earth and hell cannot hinder; but if he is about to cut me off in the midst of my days, he is a wise and just Being; and 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I have been enabled to indulge a stronger confidence in God this winter, I think, than for some time before. I feel the need of abundant prayer. It would give me great pleasure if my intimate friends, such as Mrs. M., Mrs. J., and others, would, with yourself, devote an afternoon to special united prayer for me, in reference to my soon entering on the ministerial work. It would encourage me greatly if you would. The Sabbath-noon hour has been one of unusual interest to me this winter. I intended before now to suggest a passage of scripture to be read in concert. Suppose we read through the epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus?"

The following was addressed to a friend in Newburyport:

"I am glad you felt so free to speak of the subject of religion. It is truly a great thing to be a consistent Christian. My greatest

sorrow is, that I have not lived more as a professor of our holy religion should live. Nothing can give us more comfort when we come to die, than the thought that we are Christ's, and that we have spent our lives in trying to advance the interests of his kingdom. If we would die peacefully, we must live consistently. Let us then see to it that we grow in grace daily, and live self-denying, holy lives. What if we do give up some sensual gratifications, and are thus looked upon with contempt by the world. What have we in prospect? Heaven and an eternity of bliss. And when our work is done, and well done, then, with a hope full of immortality, may we be admitted to the society of those whom you say you so much desire to see—Paul and Moses, and many more 'of whom the world was not worthy.' Who knows but that we may be permitted to converse on this very sentence together sometime during the ages of eternity? I love to think that we shall know each other in another world, and talk over what has interested us here. Take courage, then, my friend; resist every temptation; persevere in every good

work; pray often and fervently; be consistent; let your light shine; and God be with you and bless you. Write me without fail very soon. Give my love to my parents, and tell them I am as well as when I wrote.

"Truly yours, J. E. E."

JOURNAL.

"Again I have lifted up my soul to God for a preparation for the great work of the gospel ministry. I have prayed, that, if consistent with his will, my life may be prolonged and health granted me for the work; that my field of labor may be pointed out, and that I may be willing to go just where God shall send me; that I may be prepared for the great work by a baptism of the Spirit, by prayer, by the study of divine truth, and by deep inward experience of the power of the truth in my own soul, so that I may preach to others that which I do know, and that which I have felt; so that I may be 'a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.'

"I trust that this has not been a lost day, but beneficial in many respects to my soul.

God grant that the prayers which I have offered before him to-day may be returned with gracious and abundant answers of peace. The following scriptures I have read to-day, I trust not without profit: 2 Chron. 34 : 1–8, 29–33; Psalms 143, 51, 71; Ezra 9, 10 : 1–17; Dan. 9; Ezek. 3; Psalm 121.

"April 26, 1849. One year ago to-day I was licensed to preach the gospel. I would ever keep the day in remembrance. Often have I been permitted to speak in God's name in his holy house; but O, how little have I really done for his glory. How much have I preached for my own interest, and forgotten that my business was to preach Christ and win lost men to Jesus. O that God would mercifully forgive the sins, imperfections, and short-comings of the past year, and give me grace to labor for him and his glory during the year to come.

"May 13, 1849. Through God's goodness I have reached the last Sabbath of my stay in this seminary. How long the time seemed in prospect as I penned my record on the first Sabbath in my course here. How short are the years in the retrospect. It is with deep

humiliation that I recur now to the resolutions I made on that first Sabbath, and compare my course with them. I am ashamed to note my many and fearful delinquencies. O God, forgive these my sins, for the sake of thy dear Son. I am about to go forth as a herald of salvation. O God, send me not forth alone, but go thou with me. Help me to preach Christ alone. And give me souls for my hire. I have to-day fed on the body and blood of Christ. May I remember the covenant into which I have anew entered, and may I have strength given me from on high to determine to be wholly the Lord's.

"May 15, 1849, ten o'clock, P. M. Another solemn point in my life has been reached. I am now a graduate of Princeton Theological seminary, having received my diploma with my class-mates about an hour since from the hand of the President of the Board of Directors.

"Now we are to go forth under the commission of our ascended Lord. Divine Teacher, go with us; direct us to fields of labor; give us success; may we win many to thee; and O reunite us in heaven with a great multi-

tude saved by the power of the Spirit of God, through the instrumentality of our preaching."

Mr. Emerson now bade farewell to the seminary, and returned again to his beloved home, carrying with him the following kind testimonial to his piety and scholarship, from the venerable and learned Dr. Miller. The communication was addressed to his pastor:

"This letter will be delivered to you by our highly respected and beloved pupil, Mr. Emerson, whose health has again become delicate.

"The more we have become acquainted with this amiable and highly promising youth, the more we have become attached to him, and the higher we have estimated the prospects of his usefulness. He was late in coming to the seminary this session, but we have all cordially rejoiced that he *did* come. He appeared exceedingly well before; but, recently, better than ever. His diligent attention to study; his improvement by study; his remarkably amiable temper; his highly promising talents; and the *uncommon excellence* of all his public performances, have endeared him to us in an

uncommon degree. We do cherish the hope that he is preparing to be a great blessing to the church of God.

"We have some solicitude about the health of Mr. Emerson. He has an impression that a cold eastern climate will be more favorable to him than a warm southern one. I confess my impressions are somewhat different; and though I certainly could wish that he might remain an ornament and a blessing to his native state, yet I cannot resist the conclusion that he would be more likely, with his delicate pulmonary system, to enjoy vigorous health in South Carolina or Georgia, than in Massachusetts. I trust he will be divinely and mercifully directed. We shall all follow him with our esteem, our affections, and our prayers.

"I am, reverend and dear brother, yours in Christian bonds,

"SAMUEL MILLER."

CHAPTER VI.

HIS ORDINATION AND SETTLEMENT.

After leaving the seminary, Mr. Emerson preached in several vacant pulpits in the vicinity of Newburyport. His labors for several Sabbaths at Byfield were greatly blessed. The church was quickened and revived under his ministrations, and his preaching was blessed to the salvation of souls. Several persons, when examined for admission to the church, stated that their first serious impressions were received under the preaching of Mr. Emerson.

In September, 1849, he was invited to preach in the Market-hall in Newburyport, by a small society which had recently been formed.

During the summer, several devoted and zealous Christians of the town felt that some means should be adopted to bring under the direct influence of the gospel those who were not in the habit of attending public worship on the Sabbath; and hence the origin of this enterprise at the hall, which was at first en-

tered upon as an experiment. The churches of the town were generally well filled, and were supplied with able, efficient, and devoted pastors, and yet a large class of the population, and many strangers who had been drawn to the place by its manufacturing establishments, were living in the neglect of Christian privileges. To meet the wants of these persons, and to extend the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the town, the public worship of God was established in the Market-hall, a commodious building, very conveniently situated for this purpose. Those who projected and carried forward the enterprise, were judicious, zealous, and energetic men, well qualified for the noble work in which they were engaged. They were fully aware that it was no ordinary task to gather a new religious society and establish it upon a firm and permanent basis. They were conscious that to embark in the enterprise would make large draughts upon their time and their liberality, as well as add to their cares and responsibilities. Yet they did not shrink from the work, but went forward looking to God for success.

The first Sabbath that Mr. Emerson preached to them, about ninety persons were present. Very soon the audiences increased, and after a few Sabbaths a strong desire was felt to retain Mr. Emerson's services. His preaching and labors awakened a very general interest throughout the community, and especially among the young. They came in crowds to hear him, and went away either under strong convictions of sin, or impressed with the reality and importance of religion.

A call from the people was soon extended to him, and they were prepared to proceed at once to organize a church.

The question of duty presented to Mr. Emerson was one which it was very difficult for him to decide. His health was precarious, and his disposition and mental habits fitted him to take charge of a society already well established, rather than to perform the labor of laying a new foundation, and meet the discouragements incident to such a work. But his feelings had already become strongly enlisted in this infant society, and the affections of its members were very soon entwined around him. This, too,

was his native town, the residence of his parents and dearest friends; and the unanimity and earnestness with which the call was extended, strongly influenced his mind. The fact that here were the scenes of his childhood, a circumstance which ordinarily might be regarded as unfavorable to extensive usefulness, in this case was a reason why he should accept the invitation which he had received; for that childhood, as we have seen, was distinguished for its purity and piety. The little boy of ten years of age was a "preacher of righteousness," an epistle "known and read of all men." The foundations for his usefulness were already laid. His infant prayers, his Christian deportment, his earnest counsels to his school-mates, were all remembered. He had no prejudices to live down, no enemies to reconcile, no youthful indiscretions to contend against. The invitation to settle was made the subject of frequent and fervent prayer; and after seeking divine direction, and asking counsel of his friends, he decided to accept the call.

Under the preaching of Mr. Emerson in Market-hall, the audience increased to between

five and six hundred persons; oftentimes several would leave, unable to obtain seats.

In October, 1849, the society was formed under the name of the Whitefield* Congregational Society; and on January 1, 1850, twenty-two persons were organized into a church of Christ; and the same day Mr. Emerson was solemnly ordained and installed as their pastor. At an early hour the church was densely crowded, and throughout the exercises a deep solemnity pervaded the audience. The new congregation, as well as the new pastor, had awakened a great interest in a large portion of the community, and this circumstance, in connection with the pastor's youth, ardent piety, and eminent qualifications for the work of the ministry, drew together a vast audience. Mr. Emerson felt very deeply the new responsibilities and solemn duties that were imposed upon him. The long-cherished desire of his heart, to be a minister of Christ, was now realized. The solemn charge to be a faithful, earnest minister

* The remains of the eminent and gifted Whitefield are deposited under the pulpit of the Federal-street church, in Newburyport.

of the gospel, he now received. The right hand of fellowship was cordially and affectionately extended to him, amidst the warm sympathy of his brethren, the ardent love of his people, and the respect of the community.

How long he would be permitted to hold the sacred office to which he had been inducted, God only knew. As I looked upon his frail form and pale countenance, I could not but have my fears that the time might not be far distant, when we should be summoned to the same pulpit to perform other services for our beloved brother. But my prayer to God was, that he might long be spared, and that he might be the instrument of gathering a great multitude of immortal beings into the fold of Christ.

On returning home after the ordination, Mr. Emerson made the following short entry in his journal:

"January 1, 1850. I have this evening been solemnly ordained as pastor of a church and people. O Lord, who is sufficient for these things? hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. Help me, O my God, to live and to act as a minister of the gospel."

On the first Sabbath after his ordination, he preached to a very large and attentive audience, and the day was one of great interest and solemnity to his church. Much prayer was offered to God, that he would strengthen his young servant, and bless his efforts to win souls to Christ.

About this time Mr. Emerson held an interesting correspondence with a young friend, who was awakened and hopefully converted under his preaching; thus showing that in the midst of his ministerial duties he did not neglect opportunities of doing good to individuals. Letters to this friend contain frequent allusions to the public labors and responsibilities he had just assumed.

"My dear Friend—I hope that this day, like those which have preceded it, finds you in the possession and enjoyment of the Christian's hope, and that you can say with all your heart,

'What sinners value, I resign;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine.'

Let me advise you, as one who is deeply interested in your spiritual progress,

"First, never be ashamed of being called a Christian. Always be found on the side of God. Let the world take knowledge of you that you walk with Jesus.

"Second, be very particular and punctual about your times for secret prayer.

> 'Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air.'

Let nothing tempt you to put by your regular season for morning and evening devotion.

"Be an active Christian. Do all the good you can while you live. Seek opportunities to talk with your impenitent friends.

> 'Tell to sinners round,
> What a dear Saviour you have found.'

"I know you will be a cheerful Christian. I love your cheerfulness; you need not repress that.

> 'Religion never was designed
> To make our pleasures less.'

"Come and see me as often as you can spare a moment. Your visits are always welcome. I never tire of seeing you or talking with you. Do not let Satan tempt you with

doubts. Look to Jesus. Be faithful unto death, and God will give you a crown of life. Write me soon.

"Your friend, sincerely and affectionately,

"J. E. E."

"I feel very grateful to you for your visit last evening. It did me good to see and converse with you. Especially am I thankful that we were permitted to bow the knee together before our Father who is in heaven. O, my friend John, it gives me unspeakable delight to have you, whom I regard so highly, numbered among the followers of Jesus. 'Follow on to know the Lord.' 'Keep thy heart with all diligence.' Live near to Jesus. 'Pray without ceasing.' My own mind has been much solemnized to-day by the subject on which I have been writing. O, how swiftly our time passes. But what of this, if we are prepared for eternity?

"Do not fail to let me hear from you on Monday. 'I do not care how soon' you come and see me, or let me hear from you.

"Truly your friend,

"J. E. E."

"NEWBURYPORT, Saturday, P. M., Jan. 5, 1850.

"This has been to me a busy, exciting, and solemn week. I feel fatigued and rather low-spirited. It is now between three and four o'clock, and I have had my pen in hand almost ever since breakfast, not getting through as usual at two o'clock. But I could not refrain from writing once more to express my interest in you.

"God bless you, my dear friend, and cause you to grow in grace every day. May he make you eminently useful, and prolong your life in his service.

"JANUARY 12. I love to converse with you on religious subjects, and answer the questions which you put to me. May you know more and more of the Bible, and may your eyes be opened to behold wondrous things out of God's law.

"Rest assured of my earnest, sincere, and growing friendship. May we be friends in heaven."

The day after his officiating for the first time at a wedding, he writes,

"DEAR J.—I was gratified at your desire to attend the ceremony. You may think of it in after-years. If you and I should live to grow

old, never let us forget that in the same room we first had that deeply interesting conversation concerning your precious soul. O John, I reflect with more pleasure on the conversation of that evening, than I should on a score of weddings.

"If I am taken away before you are, come and stand once in a while by the grave of him who loves you as a friend and a Christian brother.

"We have added one more to the landmarks which we may look back on as we travel on in life together. We will not forget the first religious conversation, the first prayer, and the first marriage ceremony.

"May the God of heaven grant you blessings more abundant than I can wish for you. May we meet in that world where 'they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.'

"Truly your friend,

"J. E. EMERSON."

"SUNDAY-EVE, 5½ P. M., February 17.

"O John, John, John, I am worn out, discouraged, almost sick. I have labored hard,

and it seems as if I had almost spent my strength for naught. To you, the Sabbath is a refreshing day, a day of rest. To me, it is a day of anxiety, toil, and fatigue. I do not know when I have felt so worn out as I have to-day. O, how I wish I could hear singing after my labors on the Sabbath; but every harp is hung upon the willows in this house. Alas, we cannot sing. I am almost inclined to learn.

"I want to have you tell me in your next letter something about your spiritual exercises. Does the Bible still seem like a new book? Do you still maintain and enjoy constant secret prayer? I fear we have not talked as much about religion lately as we ought to. I long to have another evening when we can pray together, and talk about God, heaven, the soul, and eternity.

"Ever yours, "J. E. E."

"February 12, 1850.

"My dear Friend John—I have been looking back with much interest upon the time of our acquaintance, and especially upon our interviews the first of the present winter. The

evening of the third of December is memorable on more accounts than one; and we have made it still more memorable since, by the intimacy of our friendship.

"God has led you along, I trust, by his most holy Spirit, and made you a partaker of his rich grace in Jesus Christ. What thanks are due from you to him, who has delivered you from everlasting death.

"I have been for some time anticipating the day when you would have brought before your mind the question on which we conversed last evening, namely, the propriety of your asking admission to the church; and you must not, you will not suppose, that I had felt wholly indifferent as to the particular church with which you should connect yourself. I should have been possessed of less than common sensibility, if I had felt no degree of interest in the matter. We had talked together freely from the outset of your Christian course. You had poured your joys and sorrows into my ear, and I had told you freely all my feelings. It was a question, however, that I thought you ought to decide wholly for yourself; and you

will bear me witness that I have not attempted to influence you. Of this one thing, however, you may rest assured, wherever you go my prayers will follow you, and my love and friendship remain with you."

"My dear Friend John—I have a special request to make of you for to-morrow morning. I wish you to remember me in prayer at *a quarter before nine* in the morning. You know it is an important and solemn day with me, and I need much prayer. I will remember you at the same time. We will feel that we are praying for each other. I want you to pray that I may be assisted and blessed in the exercises of the day, and I will remember you in relation to the matter concerning which I spoke last evening."

Mr. Emerson had now entered fully upon his pastoral and pulpit labors, and every day he was gaining the confidence and affection of his people. They loved him with a devotion which is seldom felt towards a pastor, and their love was most cordially reciprocated. In the ties that united them, there was far more than

usual tenderness and strength. It was the constant desire of the pastor to feed his people with the bread of life; to lead them into green pastures, and recline with them beside the still waters of salvation. He felt a deep personal interest in every member of the flock. The sick he was ready to visit, and for the afflicted he had a heart full of sympathy. He rejoiced with those that rejoiced, and wept with those that wept.

From several letters that he addressed to the bereaved, I select the following to a young father who had lost a child; it shows the tenderness and warmth of his heart.

"NEWBURYPORT, March 27, 1850.

"MY DEAR FRIEND—Most deeply have I sympathized with you in your recent severe affliction. I have shed no public tears, but in the silence of my own retirement have I mourned over your loss, and prayed that you might be supported. This is the first cup of sorrow which you have been called to drink. This is the first practical lesson you have learned in regard to earth's sorrows. The tender bud which God had put into your hands has with-

ered away. You were looking with an interest which none but a parent can feel, for it to open its little leaves and delight you with its fragrance. But 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.'

"And now it only remains that we who have professed ourselves friends in the time of your joy and sunshine, should prove the sincerity of our friendship by our sympathy in the time of your darkness and affliction; and that you should give us an example of Christian submission, in accordance with the principles of the holy religion which you have professed.

"How willingly would the friends who stood about your lovely dying infant, have made any sacrifice to snatch the child from death. But O, how powerless we find ourselves to be in such an hour. Agonized as our hearts were to hear his groans and witness his sufferings, not one of us all, nor all of us united, had the ability to lessen one pang or repress one groan: I felt then as I feel now, How great is God; how less than nothing, in comparison with him, is the creature man.

"I feel smitten, my dear friend, as well as

yourself; for I loved the infant not only on account of my high regard for the parents, but because I considered him a boy of uncommon promise, and I was watching with great interest for his development of mind and body. But he is gone. That little coffin-lid has closed upon the fondest expectations and the most cherished hopes. The beautiful and smiling countenance has bestowed its last smile of recognition upon the father that idolized the child, and upon the mother that doted upon it. No more kisses shall fall from those lips, and the arms of the cherub which once folded so lovingly about the neck of its parents, are resting for ever on its own motionless bosom. O, how unsparing is death; how cruel is the grave!

"But blessed be God for the lively hopes that triumph over this sorrow, death, and corruption. Blessed be He who has brought to light eternal life. By his death and resurrection, you have the assurance that while the mortal body of your lovely child sleeps in yonder graveyard, his little redeemed immortal spirit lives in everlasting glory. 'Of such is

the kingdom of heaven.' Many years may roll over your head, and you may be called to lay away other loved friends in the tomb; your own time to depart may be late in life; but if faithful unto death, you shall see your infant boy again. Who knows but that as you step behind the veil which separates things temporal from things eternal, the angelic voice of your first-born may give you the welcome to eternal bliss?

"I trust I have said nothing, my dear riend, to harrow up your feelings; I desire to commend you and your beloved partner to God. Let us all give heed to what God is saying to us in this time of his rebuke. Let us be better for having been afflicted. Let us have our conversation in heaven more than ever before. Let us, as 'strangers and pilgrims,' live by faith on the Son of God; and may we have part, at last, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, and join in praising our Redeemer with the 'millions of infant souls' that 'compose the family above.' Such is the prayer of your sincere and constant friend,

"J. E. E."

In the spiritual progress of the church, the pastor felt a strong interest. He labored and prayed that every member might be entirely consecrated to God; and he had the happiness of feeling that he was surrounded by those who would coöperate with him in all his plans for doing good.

But he was specially anxious for the conversion of the impenitent. Their condition weighed as a heavy burden upon his spirit. Nor was it long before he received indications of the divine favor. The same heavenly Dove that hovered over him in childhood, while in college, and in the seminary, continued to abide with him in his new field of labor. The same bright cloud guided him by day, the same pillar of fire by night. He seemed to carry about with him a revival of religion in his heart. His warm and ardent piety impressed all with whom he came in contact; streams of religious influence flowed forth from his conversation, his prayers, his remarks in the social prayer-meeting, and his preaching. Even before his ordination, there were evidences of the presence of the Holy Spirit in his congregation. At

first a few were found to be under conviction of sin, and soon many were anxiously inquiring what they must do to be saved. Mr. Emerson soon discovered the interest which was awakened, and appointed meetings for religious conversation. Several persons who attended these meetings, have kindly given expression to their impressions of the revival, and of the scenes in which their pastor's fidelity and zeal were strikingly conspicuous.

One writes, "Never shall I forget the kind, the tender, the encouraging words which fell from our pastor's lips, while attending the meetings for inquiry. It seemed as if he wished to take each and every one of those precious souls, and lead them at once to that Saviour whom they sought. At the first meeting, as well as those that followed, the Spirit's influence was manifested in a wonderful manner. It appeared as though God had touched his servant's lips with a coal from off his altar; so touching were his appeals, so applicable his remarks to each individual present, so much interest manifested in the eternal welfare of others. None but those present at those sea-

sons can fully realize his worth. After conversing with each person by remarks suited to their situation, encouraging those that were hoping yet trembling, and urging the inquirer to decide immediately for Christ, he would make a few general remarks, and then offer fervent prayer, committing them each to God. His efforts were blessed, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to the conversion of many souls, whom, we trust, he will welcome to that heavenly world to which he has gone.

"Ever anxious to do good, he appointed meetings for the study of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which were very interesting and instructive. But he was soon deprived of the pleasure of attending these meetings, as the strong hand of disease was laid heavily upon him, and he was obliged, though very reluctantly, to relinquish them."

Another writes, "During the revival of 1850, I attended the inquiry-meetings held by Rev. Mr. Emerson, and I always found them interesting and profitable. He seemed to forget himself in the solicitude he felt for others, lest some might quench the Holy Spirit. While

he strove to impress upon the mind of the sinner the truth that he had a part to act in the salvation of his soul, yet he never for a moment gave him reason to think that his own good works would save him, but ever ascribed all to the sovereign grace of God. In his conversation with the inquirer, he made the path of duty so plain that no one could mistake the way. With him, Christ was all and in all. It was, he said, simply 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' I think that all that attended those meetings can testify to his faithfulness. For some time after the inquirers had indulged a hope, he had weekly meetings for the purpose of conversing with them; and he would advise, encourage, and warn them in a most affectionate manner, ever urging them to be active and consistent Christians."

Another says, "Such appeals, such melting invitations as fell from his lips at that time, cannot be described. He was truly baptized with the Holy Ghost, and every one who beheld his beaming countenance, and heard the heavenly words he uttered, took knowledge of him that 'he had been with Jesus.'"

Another, who a few months previous came to Newburyport a stranger, who had been awakened by his ministry, and soon after his death publicly professed faith in Christ, says, "I called to see him two days before he expired, but he was so feeble and low that I was told that I could not see him. I went away deeply grieved with the thought that probably I should never see him again, and that he would never talk with me. The next day a message came to me, that if I would go directly down to the house, I could see him. I hastened down; and on entering the room he recognized me, took me very affectionately by the hand, and said he was glad to see me. Being told that if he did not feel strong enough he had better not converse with me, he roused up and addressed me as one who had risen from the grave—his countenance, manner, and voice were so full of earnestness and deep heavenly feelings. He expressed regret that he had not seen and talked with me before; said he had felt a strong interest in my spiritual welfare, and had desired to tell me about the glorious religion of Jesus Christ. 'O, sir,' said he, 'this is a

solemn and honest hour to me—at this hour men will deal honestly with themselves. Will you not, my young friend, take Christ as your portion? Will you not give your heart to God? He will more than make up to you the loss of your dear parents. He has promised to be 'a Father to the fatherless,' and he will guide you safe through life, and give you at last a home in heaven, if you will but put your trust in him.' He then entreated me in the most earnest and persuasive manner to embrace Christ, and to serve him faithfully. I assured him that I would try to do so. 'Oh,' said he, 'pray, pray, pray much. Pray to God, and he will hear you. 'Seek him while he may be found.'' I gave him my word that I would. He again took my hand, and I looked for the last time upon his heavenly countenance."

So strong was his desire for the salvation of souls, and so deeply and fully did he enter into the revival, that he was often deprived of sleep. Yet, though exhausted and wasted by disease, he did not relax his efforts. His increased paleness seemed to give increased force to his

words, while his failing strength led him to give himself to the work of his Master with redoubled energy. Among those who attended the inquiry-meetings, were several interesting and promising young men, who became hopefully converted.

So great was the work, that Mr. Emerson was obliged to call upon his Christian brethren for assistance, and they can all bear testimony to his faithfulness. Some were astonished at his skill and wisdom in meeting the several cases that were brought before him. So intense was the feeling at times, that many present were bathed in tears; and though the weather was often inclement, yet it neither lessened the number present, nor the interest of the meetings. As the result of the revival, twenty-nine persons became hopefully converted, and made a public profession of their faith in Christ.

On one Sabbath, Mr. Emerson preached from the text, "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee." The sermon was blessed to the awakening of six persons in the congregation. He preached the same discourse in another pulpit,

and under its influence several others were induced to make their escape to the mount of refuge.

Another states that his manner was so winning, and his words so full of tenderness and love, that even strangers were very soon affected by them. Sometimes he would rise to speak when the hearts of those around him were almost crushed under the weight of sin and guilt; and before he had closed, his soothing words would seem to calm their agitation and remove their burdens. At other times he would rise when all was cold and no apparent interest was felt, and before he had concluded many would be ready to exclaim, "What must I do to be saved?"

On one occasion when the terrors of the law had been forcibly exhibited by another, and the hearts of many were filled with pain and deep anxiety, he rose, and in an attitude and with an expression of countenance that indicated strong feeling, he exclaimed, "Shiloh has come; yes, Shiloh has come, and he is ready to accept any who will go to him. Oh, sinner, flee for protection into his arms. Flee

now; for now is the accepted time. 'Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer.'"

As Mr. Emerson saw the work advancing, he rejoiced greatly. His most ardent desires were now gratified, and though his strength was wasting away, his joy was every day increasing.

Besides his interest in inquirers and young converts, he felt very solicitous for the prosperity of the Sabbath-school. This he regarded as the nursury of the church; and he delighted to converse with the scholars, and encourage their teachers. One day he remarked to a friend, "The Sabbath-school is like a beautiful garden, in which I can walk and be refreshed after the labors of the day."

The communion-seasons with his beloved people he enjoyed very highly. He anticipated them with great interest, and endeavored to prepare his own heart and the hearts of his church for the solemn meeting with the Saviour at his own table. He refers to these seasons in his journal, in which, however, his engagements and ill health allowed him to make but few entries. The following are among the last that he made:

"SEPTEMBER 27. One more anniversary has dawned upon me. I am twenty-seven years old to-day. I cannot say, as in former years, that I have enjoyed uninterrupted health during the year, for much of the time I have been sick. I find that the seeds of mortality are as thickly sown in me as in others. I know not but God may have appointed an early death for me; but I rejoice that my times are in his hand, and that the number of my days is with him. During the year he has been pleased to make me a minister of the everlasting gospel, and to bless me with an interesting revival of religion among my church and people. Praised be his name for these things. O, for grace to live this year near to God.

"DECEMBER 1. Administered the communion to my beloved church for the sixth time. It is just seventeen years since I trust I found peace in believing.

"DECEMBER 31. Finished the reading of the Bible, which I commenced September 27, 1848. To the best of my knowledge, I have read it every word *aloud*."

On the first Sabbath in January, 1851, Mr. Emerson felt a very strong desire to preach to his people; but the state of his health would not permit it. He therefore made to them the following remarks:

"It is well known to most of you, my hearers, that the anniversary of our organization as a church, and of my own ordination, occurred on the first day of the present year. One year ago to-day, I preached to you my first sermons as a settled pastor. I then looked forward with fond anticipations to the recurrence of this anniversary, as a day when we should together recount the joys and sorrows of the past, and look forward hopefully to the future. But to my great sorrow of heart, I find myself baffled in the first attempt. It would have been extremely gratifying to my own feelings, had I been able to preach to-day. I had even selected my text, and formed the plan of a sermon, but I found myself unequal to the task of its execution. A few facts, which I thought might be of interest to you, and which I had intended to embody in a discourse, I have noted down.

"Up to the first of June I was able to minister regularly on the Sabbath. Since that time my public services have been in a great measure suspended. But I have endeavored to do what I could during the week. I find, on reference to my record, that I have made, during the year, four hundred and thirty-five pastoral calls. I have probably received as many again, so that during the year I have attended to more than twelve hundred calls on matters pertaining to the great duties for which you called me to labor among you. The church which one year ago to-day numbered twenty individuals, now numbers eighty-nine. The congregation which at the beginning of the year was fluctuating and uncertain, has now become fixed in its character; and so far as I can judge, we have an afternoon attendance generally of from four hundred and fifty to five hundred persons. On every Sabbath of the year the doors of this house have been thrown open, and the word of life dispensed. There have been one hundred and fourteen sermons preached here the past year.

"For myself I can truly say, that notwith-

standing my affliction, the past has been one of the happiest years of my life. The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage. The increasing affection of a beloved people to their pastor, their untiring spirit of kindness, their many words of encouragement, their almost innumerable gifts, demand of me this public return of my warm and most heartfelt thanks. From the little girl who begged of her mother that she might have something to send to her minister, up to those ladies who furnished the warm winter garments—to each and to all, I present a pastor's warmest thanks. Nor do I count these alone gifts. For every pressure of the hand of friendship, for every tender inquiry after my health, for every prayer offered in my behalf, I thank you all. God bless you, my dear people, and make this new year happy to you through all its course. When I shall be permitted to preach to you again, God only knows. May he in infinite mercy speed the day.

"But of one thing be assured: whether the warm gales of the next summer blow on my invigorated frame and more healthy cheek,

or whether they wave the grass over my new-made grave, be assured that the interests of this church and people shall be ever near my heart. And while a breath or a pulse remains, will I seek her peace and prosperity. Be assured, that

> 'For her my tears shall fall,
> For her my prayers ascend;
> To her my cares and toils be given,
> Till toils and cares shall end.'"

When the speaker took his seat, apparently exhausted by this effort, the deepest emotion was manifested by the whole audience. His allusion to his own grave touched and melted every heart. All felt, that as this was his first, so it was, in all human probability, his last anniversary with his people. They felt that the fair form now before them must soon moulder in the cold grave; that the eye that beamed upon them with so much affection, must soon be closed; that the lips that had told them of Jesus and of heaven, must soon be sealed in death. They thought of the long, long silence in the grave of that voice, the sweet tones of which were now so clear and distinct. The

remembrance, too, of their pastor's instructions, entreaties, appeals, faithful, untiring labors, and the crowd of interesting associations that rushed into the mind, overpowered the assembly. There were hearts there whose emotions language cannot describe—hearts from which the impressions of that hour will never, never fade away.

Mr. Emerson continued, although so feeble, to attend public worship, and occasionally he read a hymn or offered a short prayer. He was anxious to devote his little remaining strength to God. It was my privilege to spend a Sabbath with him about this time, and in all the exercises of the day, and in every thing pertaining to the congregation, he took the liveliest interest. In the afternoon the impenitent were particularly addressed; and on his way home he expressed a very earnest desire that the discourse might be blessed to their salvation.

About the middle of January he said to a friend, "I feel that a crisis in my case is near at hand. I have a desire that the church should hold a day of fasting and prayer on account of my health. I want to try the power

of prayer, and shall not feel that every means has been used till this is tried. It has been a great struggle to my mind to give up preaching. When I think that five hundred precious souls are expecting to hear the gospel from my lips, that a dear church is looking up to me for counsel, I feel that it requires more prayer yet to bring my mind to a right state."

At another time he said, "I begin to feel willing to leave the matter with God, though my prayer daily is, 'Lord, spare me yet a little longer, that I may preach Christ again to my dear people.' I have felt a greater desire than ever, since my illness, to preach Christ once more."

The day of fasting and prayer was appointed; and when it arrived, Mr. Emerson made the following entry, which is the last in his journal:

"JANUARY 29, 1851. This day has been set apart by the members of my church, as a day of fasting and prayer for the recovery of their pastor's health. I have not preached for eleven Sabbaths, on account of ill health; and indeed have preached but very little since last

June. God has laid his hand heavily upon me. I am troubled with cough, loss of strength and appetite, etc. What God is intending to do with me I know not, but I think I desire to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his. If I am to be raised up, the blessing of God alone can do it. O that God would help my church to offer up this day the prayer of faith which 'shall save the sick.'"

On this occasion he addressed to the members of his church the following communication:

"DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS—I have been looking forward to this day with the deepest anxiety and interest. For many months, as you well know, God has laid the hand of affliction upon me. I have been deprived of the pleasure of performing the more active duties of the ministry among you. My strength also has failed me, and 'I am like a broken vessel.' In all these difficulties you, my dear people, have deeply sympathized, and have felt yourselves afflicted also.

"Could your kindness and sympathy have restored me, I should now have health and vigor. But the hand of God yet presses heav-

ily upon me, and from him alone deliverance must be sought. While I am aware that for a long time much prayer has been offered up in my behalf, both in public and in private, I have still felt strongly desirous that a day should be appointed, when the prayers of this church should go up unitedly to the throne of grace. My heart was deeply moved at the favorable reception with which my proposal met. I have again and again entreated the Lord to be with you on this day, and give you the spirit of fervent, prevailing prayer.

"It would be impossible for me to go over the instances recorded in the Bible, of the answers given to fervent prayer. Read, if you please, at your meetings to-day, the thirty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. Why may we not expect a like answer, if we offer up the prayer of faith? Remember too, my dear friends, that we have committed ourselves before the world. Many listened when notice was given that you were going to try the power of prayer in behalf of a sick pastor. Will you not entreat the Most High to convince them that he does hear and answer prayer?

"But I do not ask you to pray unconditionally for my life. I desire to live longer only if it is God's will. If I am spared, pray for me that I may be more useful, may set a holier example, may be a better Christian and a better minister. If, after all our prayers and efforts, God should indicate his design of taking me away from earth, pray for me that I may have heartfelt resignation to the divine will, a well-grounded hope, the clear assurance of faith, an easy departure, and that I may be able, on a dying bed, to testify to the power of our holy religion.

"My prayers will mingle with yours to-day, brethren and friends; this day will not soon be forgotten; its results take hold on eternity. O that God would manifest himself to us to-day, as he has never done before.

"While I live, you and your interests will be ever near my heart. With my earnest prayer for God's blessing upon you, I remain,

"Your sincere friend,

"And affectionate pastor,

"JOHN E. EMERSON."

This was indeed a solemn day to this afflicted

people. They listened to this short address from their pastor with flowing tears, and fervent were their supplications that he might be spared to them. Yet they could not but feel that the time was not far distant when they must separate. The evidences of disease were too apparent to leave now any room for hope.

Towards the latter part of February, Mr. Emerson felt almost too feeble to attend public worship. The last Sabbath that he was out was March 2. The Saturday previous, feeling very weak, he prayed earnestly that God would give him strength to attend upon the exercises of the sanctuary. On Sabbath morning he asked his mother to pray for him. They had an affecting season together, and he walked to church, leaning, as it were, on the arm of his blessed Saviour. In attempting to offer prayer, his voice faltered, his strength failed, and he sunk back into his chair. His prayer remained before his audience like a beautiful, yet broken column—a column which, though abruptly sundered, yet pointed towards heaven. On returning home, he threw himself upon the sofa and burst into tears. He felt that his last

public service had been performed. The "silver cord" was now loosened; the "golden bowl" was broken. He remarked to his parents that he had looked upon his beloved flock for the last time, and had bade them farewell. In alluding to his prayer he said, "O, those dear young men, I did long to make one more effort to do them good. I did want to offer one more public petition in their behalf."

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLOSING SCENES OF HIS LIFE.

Mr. Emerson was now obliged to spend much of his time at home, and friends who were with him have kindly furnished the following facts and incidents connected with the closing scenes of his life.

"About three weeks before he took his chamber, at his request a few friends spent the evening alone with him in his study. He spoke freely of his views in regard to his sickness—that he trusted he was resigned to the will of God, though he had a strong desire to live, that he might preach the gospel. 'I have been to God again and again with the petition, that if this desire was wrong he would take it away.' He asked if a strong desire to live was inconsistent with true submission.

"During the conversation he remarked, 'When I awake in the night I ask myself, Am I ready to go now, if God should call? I think I am. I feel that I have cast myself

upon Christ, and trust in him alone for salvation; and what more can a poor sinner do? I wish to be stripped of every thing else, and be wrapped all around with the robe of Christ's righteousness. Could I be permitted to preach again, I would preach Christ more, pray Christ more, sing Christ more. O, how I long to take my sermons, and breathe into them the spirit and feelings I now have.'

"At another time he said, 'I have been reviewing my past life to-day, and I feel that I am a great sinner; but I tell you what I am going to do. I am going to put all my sins in one bundle, and carry them to Jesus.' The next morning, on going into his room, he exclaimed, 'I have done it; I have carried all my sins to Christ, and he has forgiven and accepted me.'

"On another occasion he remarked, 'I have been reviewing God's dealings with me as it regards my illness; how wisely and gently he has dealt with me. Had I known, at the commencement of my illness, what was to be the result, I could not have borne it. When it became evident that I must cease my active

labors, I felt at first as if it could not be—I must preach. But God said, Stop. Then I felt I can visit my people, I can attend the meetings for conference and prayer. But God soon said to me, You must give up these. Still I could meet with my people on the Sabbath, and occasionally read a hymn or offer prayer. But God has now said to me, You must give up this also; and he has enabled me to say, Not my will, but thine be done. I trust I am now willing to live or die, just as God pleases. He has been with me thus far, and I know he will be with me to the end; he will give me grace for the dying hour; I can trust him, for he is faithful.'

"March 8, spent the afternoon with Mr. Emerson. Soon after my entering his room, he said, with much emotion, 'O how many are my mercies! I am pressed down and overwhelmed with them; what can I do to evince my gratitude? What a mercy that I am here. What should I do, were I from home, and among strangers? Can we doubt that the hand of God is in our church enterprise? I do not think it was ambition that

induced me to settle here. I was willing to preach to a small number; and it was with the desire and hope that I might be useful, that I settled here.' The remark being made, that God had in a wonderful manner blessed his efforts, and that he had been permitted, during his short ministry, to see more of the fruits of his labors than some ministers have during a long life; and that it must be gratifying to know there are those who bless God that he has been instrumental in plucking them as brands from the burning; he replied, 'I bless God if he has made me in any degree useful. I needed this affliction, to show me that God did not need me as an instrument.'

"On another occasion he said, 'It seems evident now what the will of God is. I have given up my church and people. Satan sometimes tells me my submission is forced; but I do not believe it. I gave them up just as soon as I felt it was God's will that I should do so.' At another time he remarked, 'I have taken this dear church, and carried it and placed it in the hands of the great Head of the church, and I know he will take care of it.'

"On another occasion, the conversation turned upon the joys of heaven. He remarked, 'How strange that those who believe heaven such a delightful place, should be so reluctant to enter there. It is but little indeed that we can know of heaven. The Bible, in speaking of its joys, uses figures drawn from earthly things, golden streets, pearly gates, etc.; but it is enough for me that we shall glorify God; that to me is the bliss of heaven.' 'In my anticipations of heaven, it has always been a delightful thought that those friends in whose society I have spent so many happy hours here, will be with me there.'

"At another time: 'I love to think of meeting friends in heaven, but I do not want them put first—the Saviour, the Saviour first. O, it is a delightful thought, that perhaps I may be employed as a ministering spirit to those I loved. Who knows? Who knows? I am going to heaven a little in advance, and there I shall meet and with open arms welcome my friends and the members of my church, as they one after another are admitted to the mansions of the blessed. God grant that not

one of this little band shall be missing.' At another time, as one wiped his brow, he exclaimed, 'God, God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

"On one occasion, reference being made to his past life, and to the incidents connected with his early years, so unlike childhood in general, he instantly checked any further remark of the kind by saying, 'I place no reliance on any thing of this kind; I have not a shadow of hope on that account; my only hope is in the atoning sacrifice and righteousness of Christ.' A remark made by some who called to inquire after him, that they almost envied those who had the privilege of watching around his bed, being repeated in his hearing, he said with much emotion, 'Oh, I am sorry any one should make a remark like that; I am nothing but a poor sinner.'

"The next day he remarked, 'The doctrines that I have loved, and the gospel I have preached, are now my only support. The last sermon I wrote was from the text, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;' and I find that this is all that I can do.

Simple faith in Christ is all that can sustain in an hour like this. I cast myself entirely on Christ. O, how many times I have done this, this winter. I feel that I am a great sinner; but the blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin. These two passages have afforded me great consolation: 'Laid in Zion for a foundation,' and, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.'"

"At another time, after some remarks upon the foundation of his hopes, he asked with great emphasis, 'If I have come to Christ, and cast myself upon him, what then?' It was replied, 'Why, he has received you; for he has declared, Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' 'Well, and what then?' 'He has promised, when he has begun a good work, he will carry it on to perfection.' 'And what then?' 'He will be with you in life, go with you even through the valley of the shadow of death, and land you safe on Canaan's side.' With increasing earnestness and energy he again repeated the question, 'And what then?' It was replied, 'I can go no further; for inspiration has declared, 'Eye hath not

seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'' On his replying in the negative to the question, 'Do you suffer much pain?' it was remarked, 'Your heavenly Father deals very gently with you.' He immediately replied, 'Yes; had I known all this last summer, I could not have endured it. But God has very gently and kindly broken to me my situation.'"

On Sabbath morning, March 9, he had two ill-turns, and was thought to be dying. He conversed, however, about death with great composure; said, if it was God's will, he was ready to go now. "I feel that I have given myself to Christ, and that he has accepted me, and it makes but little difference which of us goes first. The separation will be short. We shall soon meet to part no more."

"My people would not have invited me to become their minister, if they had supposed that in little more than a year I should receive another call, and one *that I must accept*. But God will provide for them a shepherd."

During the day, he conversed much on the subject of religion, and frequently offered prayer. He prayed for himself, that he might be prepared for the scenes that were before him; for his parents, that God would support them under their afflictions, and enable them to submit to his will; for all his dear relatives and friends; for the church of Christ, and for those who were living without hope and without God in the world.

He saw that day three impenitent young men, members of his society, and conversed with them with great earnestness and faithfulness. He entreated them to attend now to the matter of their souls' salvation. "What should I now do," said he, "without an interest in Christ? I beseech you to be prepared for such an hour as this; for it surely will come."

Through Monday and Tuesday he continued about in the same state, seeing a large number of people, and conversing with them upon the interests of eternity. He was exceedingly appropriate in adapting his remarks to the different cases that came before him.

On Tuesday evening he was very much ex-

hausted from seeing so many persons, and exerting himself to do them good. There were fears that he would not revive; but after a few hours he appeared more comfortable, although he was much weaker than before. During the night he rested but little, and conversed on heavenly things.

The next day he asked for one of his sermons that he had recently preached. On looking at it he remarked, "I will rest at this hour upon what is therein written. I have endeavored to preach the simple truths of the gospel, and upon these I now rely for hope and comfort."

The conversation turned upon the covenant of redemption, and he discoursed upon it with much animation and interest. He remarked that he desired to hold Christ forth, and to put himself in the background—that Christ was all in all, and himself but a worm in the dust.

Frequently, in the course of his sickness, he would exclaim, "I long to glorify God." At times he would cry out in an impassioned manner, and with his soul glowing with un-

speakable rapture, "O, to glorify God! O, to glorify God!"

One day his mother said to him, that it must afford him great consolation to have been the instrument of establishing the Whitefield church, and to think that his name would be handed down to posterity as its first pastor.

"*My name*," said he, raising himself in his bed, and with a countenance beaming with animation,

"'*My name* is printed on His breast,
His book of life contains my name;
I'd rather have it there impressed,
Than in the bright records of fame.

'When the last fire burns all things here,
Those letters shall securely stand;
And in the Lamb's fair book appear,
Writ by th' eternal Father's hand.'"

At another time, when he was speaking of death, he was asked if he had any fears. He replied, "No, not exactly fears, but

'The pains, the groans, the dying strife,
Fright our approaching souls away.'"

Then, after a moment's pause, he added,

"While He affords his aid,
I'll never yield to fear;
Though I should walk through death's dark shade,
My Shepherd 's with me there."

These lines were very precious to him, and he often repeated them. Sometimes he seemed to be longing to go, and would say, "I hope I shall not be impatient, but be willing to wait. God's time is the best time.

> 'Oh, if my Lord would come and meet,
> My soul would stretch her wings in haste,
> Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
> Nor feel the terrors as she passed.'"

He had some darkness and temptations, and was sometimes afraid that his submission was forced. He would say, "I kept up as long as I could; was that wrong? Yet I desire to be swallowed up in the divine will. I roll myself on God; I leave all with him; I am a poor lost sinner, and God has this last winter made me feel it. O, what should I do without a Saviour? This is an honest hour; I have tried to do something for Christ; I love my church and people, but God has made me willing to give them up."

About a week before his death he had a severe conflict with the adversary, and the Saviour hid his face from him. It was in the night. He had been lying still for some time

with his eyes closed, when he turned his face towards his watcher and said, "I am in great trouble; I fear I have not been sincere; I have not lived to the glory of God." Thinking he had been dreaming and was not quite awake, he was requested to look around the room, and was asked, "Do you know where you are?" After a moment's pause, he said, with great emphasis, "Oh, I am out of hell. What a great sinner I am!" The bed shook with his agitation. It was said to him, "Jesus died to save sinners, and his blood cleanseth from all sin. Turn the eye of your faith to Christ." His favorite passage was repeated: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He remarked, "I fear that I have not been sincere in my preaching, nor in my prayers. I have preached myself, and not Christ, and now I am going to die. What shall I do? O, what shall I do?" Many promises from the word of God were repeated to him, but he could not take hold of them. He was told that this was a temptation from Satan; that God was permitting it for the trial of his faith; perhaps to see if he could trust his Saviour in

the dark. But he seemed to refuse all consolation. He suddenly broke out in prayer, and such confessions of sin, such loathing of self, and prostration of soul before God, and such a resting of all on the Lord Jesus Christ, few have ever witnessed. He was reminded of his early impressions, when he suffered ridicule for his religion. He replied, "I think I was sincere then, but I have not lived for the glory of God." His soul refused to be comforted.

It was said to him, "One thing you can do." With great earnestness he asked, "What is it?" "Why, you can let all that is past go, and begin now for the first time." This seemed to give him new light. He was reminded of the mercy of the Saviour to the thief on the cross. "I am going to begin anew," he said; "yes, I will leave all, and throw myself on Christ."

He tried to pray, but he was so exhausted that he could say but a few words. With a most imploring look, he said, "Do pray." It was a solemn moment. He and his friends tried to make a new consecration of themselves to God. He seemed a little more calm,

and said, "What would my people think if they were here? I have been urging them to trust in Christ, and now their minister cannot trust him." Bunyan's Pilgrim was referred to, when he got into Doubting castle, and lay there for some time; but the key of promise opened every door, even the iron gate. He replied, "O, how good that is." Many promises were repeated, and he seemed to be meditating upon them. His attendant gave him something to take, and tried to persuade him to go to sleep and get a little rest. He lay still some time, and then looked up, and with a placid countenance said, "I can trust Him now; I think that he has received me; I roll myself upon him." The remainder of the night he was calm. The Saviour had lifted the light of his countenance upon him, and he was filled with peace and joy. He repeated the words,

"In spite of all my foes,
Thou dost my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows,
And joy exalts my head."

His friend retired to rest about four o'clock

in the morning. After resting a few hours, she went into his chamber. He turned his eyes towards the door, and as soon as he saw her, he said, with a sweet smile, "Peace, peace, sweet peace!" "I think," says she, "I never saw his countenance, through his sickness, beam with so much glory as on that morning. I could think of nothing but his face, like unto the face of an angel. He appeared to be swallowed up in God; heavenly things filled his soul. He said that he felt the glow of heaven through his whole system. It needs more than a human tongue to describe his appearance. In the course of the day he alluded to the temptation of the night before, and said, 'I am glad mother was not here. Say nothing about it to her, because it will distress her.'"

He conversed on the doctrine of the Trinity, and spoke much of God's covenant; wished that those around would give him their views of the covenant of grace; and then he expressed his own thoughts upon it. He spoke of the wonderful love of God in the covenant of redemption, and desired to examine anew these great subjects.

The next day he remarked that he should like to have a few friends cluster around his bed, and talk about heaven. Mr. and Mrs. Morse, who were below stairs, were called up. After they came in, he said, "Here is dear father, and mother, and cousin, and friends, looking so happy. I thought I should like to talk about heaven. O, what pure worship there is in the upper sanctuary. There they serve God without sin." He conversed as long as he had strength; then the hymn was read,

"Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love."

He entered into it fully, and seemed to have caught the spirit of the heavenly world.

One lady who watched with him one night, said that she would not have missed of the privilege on any account. His conversation and prayers were a rich treat to her soul, and she felt strengthened, elevated, and blest by the interview.

One afternoon a friend was sitting near him and heard him say, very faintly, "I want to go home;" she replied, "You are at home now." He then said, "I am sick." "Yes," she re-

plied, "you are sick here in your own room, among your own friends." He looked up, and in the words of Scripture said, "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick."

On Saturday, March 15, he was attacked with severe spasms. On recovering, as soon as the power of utterance was restored, he said, with great emphasis, "On the Rock, on the Rock; peace, peace like a river." On addressing his mother with the question, "Are you supported?" and receiving an affirmative reply, he said, "Christ is my support;" repeating, with energy,

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
He will not, he cannot desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
He'll never, no never, no never forsake."

Adding, "He has loved me, he has saved me, he has carried me almost through." After a few moments he repeated the lines,

"Jesus, to thy dear faithful hand
My naked soul I trust,
And my flesh waits for thy command
To drop into the dust."

After resting a few moments, he commenced the hymn,

"Why should we start and fear to die?"

repeating the whole with remarkable distinctness and emphasis. At the close of the verse,

> "Jesus can make a dying bed
> Feel soft as downy pillows are,"

he raised his eyes to heaven, and with an expression almost heavenly added, "Yes, yes, yes." The remark being made by one who loved him with almost parental affection, "Dear pastor, our hearts bleed, but not for you—you are a happy man;" he replied, "It is God who has done it; it is God, it is God who has placed me here."

Sabbath morning, March 16, after lying for some time apparently too feeble to converse, he suddenly engaged in earnest supplication. He first alluded to its being the Sabbath; then prayed most fervently for those assembled for public worship—for those who proclaimed the messages of salvation; then for the church, that they might be quickened in duty—for the impenitent, that God would make bare his arm for their salvation; and finally for himself, that the Saviour would still be near—that underneath him might be laid the everlasting arms—and that, if it was God's

will, he might have a quiet and easy dismissal. At the close of these petitions, which were offered in a whisper, he seemed suddenly to be indued with new strength. He began to converse, and continued with little intermission for more than two hours.

He first remarked, "It is the Sabbath. What a blessed Sabbath they spend in the sanctuary above, where they worship without sin." It was asked, "Would you like to join them?" He replied, "O yes, I long to worship God without sin; I would glorify God. I do believe I have desired heaven, that I might glorify God." Again he remarked, "God gives me strength to speak a few words more to some of my people. Let us cluster around here, and spend the day in praise. I want to praise him, I will praise him; 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'" On his mother's coming into the room, he requested her to take a seat near him; and affectionately taking her hand and kissing it, said, "Precious, precious mother; have we not had sweet communion together? Oh, I love to think of those hours of prayer. I am glad we have had them"—referring to

the season of devotion they had from his childhood enjoyed on Sabbath noon. He then, with a power and pathos which language in vain attempts to portray, went over some incidents connected with his Christian experience.

"At ten years of age, I trust I gave my heart to the Lord; and at twelve, openly professed my faith in him. If ever I enjoyed communion with God, it was during these first two years of my Christian life. I well remember, that during my school-hours I used to look forward with great delight to those seasons of devotion, which I always observed three times a day. Ever since then I have endeavored, though in a poor and feeble way, to serve the Lord. When I wandered, I seemed to see the Father and Son in consultation, and heard them say, 'This our child has wandered; we must bring him back, if it is by chastisement; but the stripes shall be few, we will lay the rod very gently upon him;' and Oh, how gently it was. I did hope God would spare me to labor longer in his vineyard, that I might glorify him in being the instrument of saving souls. But he has ordered it otherwise,

and his will be done. I trust I shall glorify him in heaven. There has been a great deal of speculation about heaven and its joys, but I think we can know but little about it; it is enough for me that I shall glorify God there."

Shortly after he expressed a wish to converse further with two young men, companions of his childhood, who had called on the evening previous. One of them had come from a distance, that he might see his friend once more. He took them both affectionately by the hand, expressed the deep interest he felt in their welfare, and urged them, by the love they bore him, and by the most weighty considerations drawn from the solemnities of a dying hour, to attend immediately to the concerns of their souls. On the remark being made by one of these young friends, that "he had come from Providence, with the hope that this scene might be blest to him;" he replied, "I am glad to hear you say that. I wish you could say, you had resolved to begin now to serve God." He expressed many thanks for their tokens of affection; said he had ever loved

them, and longed for their salvation. "But," said he, "I have not been as faithful personally with you as I should have been. Forgive me for this." It was said, in reply, "You have nothing to reproach yourself for, on that account. Had we listened to your counsel, we should have been happier men than we now are." It was remarked by another young friend who was present during this interview, and to whom he addressed a similar remark, "Your life has been a constant reproof; it has always condemned us." During the day he conversed with several other young men belonging to his congregation, some of whom had formerly been inquirers, and all of whom were particularly and solemnly addressed, as the case of each one seemed to demand.

March 17, afternoon. To one who had taken a seat near his bedside, he looked up with one of his sweetest smiles, and said, "Here are father, mother, cousin, and all my dear friends." His father replied, "Here are your best friends." He answered, "Yes, and I love you all; but God calls, and I wait his bidding to go. And where he is, there shall I be also."

After lying silent for a few moments, he said in a kind of soliloquy, "God supporting, Christ sustaining, heaven expecting; these are high joys, but they are not heaven—they are not heaven. I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.

'O glorious hour, O blest abode;
I shall be near and like my God.'"

After a few moments he exclaimed, "Billions upon billions, billions upon billions, and heaven still!" His mother replied, in those beautiful lines of Watts,

"There we shall see His face,
And never, never sin;
There, from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

As soon as she closed, he replied,

"Yes, and before we rise
To that immortal state," etc.

It was said to him, "You have found God faithful." "Oh, yes," he quickly answered, "faithful to his promises." At another time he remarked, "God has fulfilled his promises to the very letter." During the afternoon, he remarked to his mother, "How wonderful it is that you are thus supported, and can sit by the

bed of your dying son and be so calm." A little while after he said, "I hope you will never distrust God again. Will you not from henceforth trust him? Oh, I want to praise him; had I voice and strength, I would sound his praise from shore to shore."

Tuesday, March 18, he repeated with great emphasis, the whole of the hymn,

"Lord, at thy temple we appear."

In repeating the words,

"Jesus, the vision of thy face,"

and the verse following, his countenance assumed an expression almost unearthly. It seemed indeed as if his face shone with a glory reflected from the heavenly world, with which he held such blissful communion. Just after repeating this hymn, he looked upon each of those who were present, and with a beautiful smile, said, "It is pleasant to be with dear friends, but it is better to be with Jesus. I shall soon be with Jesus. Where Jesus leads, I shall go; the Saviour of the world is my Saviour." Then he repeated the hymn,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear."

A day or two afterwards, after a season of severe suffering, he said, "Pray for me, that I may not be impatient, but be willing to wait the Lord's time." On asking the hour, and being told, he remarked, "How slowly the hours move! Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming?"

Sabbath, March 23, he said but little during the day. He expressed to his attending physician his unshaken reliance upon Christ; repeated those lines,

> "Blest Jesus, every smile of thine
> Shall sweet endearment bring."

Towards night it was evident he was entering the dark valley, and for a short season the light of his Father's countenance was withdrawn. His agony, during these few moments, seemed to bear some resemblance to His who exclaimed, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" He threw his arms upward, raised his eyes heavenward, and with an indescribable earnestness exclaimed, "Saviour, I will come to thee; I have come to thee; *I do now come to thee.*" Turning to those around, he exclaimed, "Repeat to me some of the promises."

Several were repeated, among which were the following: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." "Does he say that? does he say that?" he asked with deep emotion; "then I will trust him." Instantly the darkness was dispelled, the Sun of righteousness arose upon his soul never more to set, and quiet as an infant he reposed on the bosom of his Redeemer. On his mother's coming in, he remarked, "The Saviour hid his face from me for a moment, but it is all over now: he has come. I am, as it were, embosomed in God; he is within, above, below, and around me."

Shortly after, he expressed a wish to see the deacons and some of the brethren of the church. Several were sent for. He then asked to have the hymn read, commencing,

"I would not live alway, I ask not to stay."

It was read and sung in his chamber, and appeared to soothe and comfort him. In a mo-

ment afterwards his soul was filled with joy Heavenly pleasures seemed to roll over him, and pervade the whole man. "Oh," he exclaimed, "peace, peace, sweet peace, the peace of God that passeth all understanding! It flows like a river, calm, bright, reflecting the temples and palaces of the celestial city." One who had lately joined the church he took by the hand, and said to him, "Do be a faithful, praying Christian; consecrate your all to the blessed Saviour."

To another who had long been a church-member he said, "Sir, I trust that you will speak often of that religion which you profess. O, set not your heart on earthly riches; they are the merest bubbles. To glorify God is the great end of your being." He then remarked, "How gently I have been let down to the grave, giving up gradually one thing after another. I thought at first that they could not do without me at the Wednesday evening meeting; but I find they can. They have good meetings now. It takes the presence of God to make a good meeting. Where he is with his smiles and love, there, there is life and

peace. I often used to think, when a boy, that I should like to die of consumption, that I might have time to arrange every thing, and be prepared for the solemn event. I hope that I shall have my reason to the last. When I am found to be dying, call together the family and friends, that I may bid them an affectionate farewell."

The remark was made to him, "Perhaps you may recover even now." "Oh no," said he; "and I don't know that I desire to get well." "But," replied a friend, "if God has a work for you to do here, should you not be willing to live?" "Yes, yes," he said; "but then I should be so disappointed, as I have got so near to heaven now. I want to see my heavenly Father, and the Saviour, and the bright angels; and I shall be so delighted to welcome you all to heaven."

For several hours he coughed without cessation, and it was feared that he would strangle. Once, after a very severe attack, he uttered a groan, which was the only one that was heard during his sickness. When he revived so as to be able to speak, he cried to God for grace

to enable him to bear with composure all that might be laid upon him. "Oh, send me relief," he exclaimed; "nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

In the afternoon deacon Thurston called, and after a little conversation, Mr. Emerson said to him, "I want to deliver to you the church books, and perhaps now is as good a time as any." On these being handed to him, Mr. Emerson remarked, "I think that you will find every thing correct. I have made all the entries myself, and have endeavored to insert every thing in its proper place." His habits of order were indeed remarkable through life; and they continued with him to his dying hour.

He now felt that his work on earth was done, and that he must wait for the summons to depart. He repeated the beautiful stanza,

> "So shall my minutes smoothly run,
> While here I wait my Father's will;
> My rising and my setting sun
> Roll gently up and down the hill."

Some flowers were sent in to him. He took them in his hand, and looking upon them said, "These are the last flowers that I shall see on

earth, and they are sent to adorn my pathway to the tomb. Oh, that I may soon enter the celestial paradise, where flowers never fade, where all is freshness and purity and love. But I am so unworthy of the meanest place in heaven. O Lord, cleanse me from all guilt; sanctify me, that I may be a flower to wave and bloom for ever amid the breezes of heaven.

Some persons came into the room after a prayer-meeting, and asked him if he would like to hear about it. He replied, "Yes, I should. It does sinners good to hear about prayer." He was informed that some inquirers had tarried for religious conversation. "I am glad of it," said he; "I wish I had strength to talk with them and lead them to Jesus."

He desired to pray, when two friends stood by his side, and holding up his hands, he prayed in the most fervent and touching manner. His countenance was radiant with heavenly glory; no words can describe his appearance. Several persons who saw him have assured me that no language could portray this and similar scenes. They seemed to be communing with a departed spirit, while with him. With clasped

hands and uplifted eyes and a most heavenly countenance, he pleaded with God—pleaded as one who was directly before the throne, and in the presence of the divine Majesty

He conversed about his burial with perfect composure. It was his request that his late beloved pastor, the Rev. J. F. Stearns, D. D., should preach his funeral-sermon, and that the writer should offer the prayer. Fearing that he might die on Saturday evening, he particularly requested that no work that could possibly be avoided, should be done on the following Sabbath. He wished that the family might spend the day in prayer and religious worship.

On being asked where he wished to be buried, he replied, "Oh, my dear people will find a resting-place for me; I should like to lie where my mother can rest by my side." He then repeated the hymn, commencing,

"Jesus, full of all compassion."

When he reached the last stanza, he raised his voice, with great emphasis, and said,

"*Saved!*—the deed shall spread new glory
Through the shining realms above;
Angels sing the pleasing story,
All enraptured with thy love."

He now rallied all his energies, and exerted his remaining strength to give those around his dying admonition and counsel. As some were about to leave, he said, "Do not go yet, I have a little more to say." It was remarked, "You are so weak, perhaps you had better not attempt to speak any more." He replied, "I must; there will never be such an opportunity again. I feared the cloud which came over my mind a short time since might cause your faith to waver. But it was only for a moment. I cast myself on Christ; he has received me. Though all my church should forsake him, I would still cleave to him. Dear brethren, do not let your faith be shaken; trust in the Lord; he will be with you."

The last prayer that he offered was a fervent petition for the members of his beloved flock. He pleaded that God would abundantly bless them—would watch over them—would permit him to meet them all in that bright world where there will be no more parting—no more pain, sorrow, or death.

Soon after, he was asked if he would not try to sleep, as he must feel fatigued. He

signified his assent, folded his arms upon his breast, and closed his eyes for ever on earthly scenes. His breath grew shorter and shorter, until ten minutes before one o'clock, on the morning of Tuesday, March 25, 1851, when without a struggle he sweetly breathed out his soul, which was borne by angels to mansions in the skies.

He had often, during his sickness, prayed that he might lean his head on Jesus' breast,

"And breathe his life out sweetly there."

His heavenly Father heard and answered his prayer.

His funeral services were performed in the Federal-street church, in Newburyport, on Thursday. The morning opened bright and beautiful, and preparations were made for the performance of the last solemn rite to the remains of our young brother. Between one and two o'clock, the people from every part of the town were seen flocking to the church. At the hour appointed for the services, two o'clock, the church was so densely filled that it was impossible to gain access to the pulpit,

except through the entrance in the rear. When I reached the pulpit, and looked over the vast multitude of mourners, I was overcome by the impressive scene before me. The walls of the church, the organ, and galleries, were all hung in deep mourning. Every spot where one could stand was occupied, and very many persons were outside, unable to get within the doors. Among the audience were a very large number of clergymen, many of whom had come in from the neighboring towns. In the aisle in front of the pulpit rested the corpse, robed in white, with a beautiful bouquet of white flowers upon the breast, and another upon the coffin. The countenance of the departed was placid and sweet, even in death. Here he quietly rested in the venerable and time-hallowed church, the walls of which had echoed the voice of a Whitefield, a Murray, a Dana, a Williams, and a host of other eminent preachers of righteousness—a church in which he had made a public profession of his faith in Christ—in which he had been ordained for the holy work of the ministry. Upon the services of a sanctuary which had in times past so

often delighted and nourished his soul, he is now an unconscious attendant. The swell of the organ reaches not his ear; the vast crowd around him he sees not, heeds not. He is worshipping in another temple, gazing upon other scenes, listening to other music. He has left the church militant and joined the church triumphant. He has "come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all."

The exercises of the occasion, throughout, were solemn and impressive. When allusion was made to the departed, the sympathies of the audience were at once manifested, and many eyes were suffused with tears. At the close, an invitation was given for those who desired to look upon the corpse, to pass up the centre aisle, and retire from the house through the side aisles. For more than half an hour there was a constant stream of people, who availed themselves of the opportunity to look upon the remains, and drop the last

tear of affection over the beloved pastor and friend.

The procession that followed him to the grave was the longest ever witnessed in the town. Besides his own relatives and parishioners, many others joined to pay to him their last tribute of respect.

At the cemetery the scene was deeply affecting. The crowd gathered around the new-made grave, that was open to receive the young pastor. The trees were just putting on their spring attire, and the earth was clothing itself in its robe of green. A few flowers were starting up, emblematic of the immortal spring which had already burst upon the ransomed soul of the departed.

As soon as all in the procession had reached the grave, the following dirge was sung by the choir of the Whitefield congregation:

"Go to the grave in all thy glorious prime,
In full activity of zeal and power:
A Christian cannot die before his time;
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour.

"Go to the grave, at noon from labor cease;
Rest on thy sheaves, thy harvest task is done!
Come from the heat of battle, and in peace,
Soldier, go home; with thee the fight is won!

"Go to the grave, for there thy Saviour lay
In death's embraces, ere he rose on high;
And all the ransomed, by that narrow way,
Pass to eternal life beyond the sky.

"Go to the grave; now take thy seat above;
Be thy pure spirit present with the Lord,
Where thou for faith and hope hast perfect love,
And open vision for the written word."

As the assembly retired to their homes, many breathed the silent prayer, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

My dear reader, shall he welcome you to that bright world whither he has gone? Could he leave for a season the mansions of the new Jerusalem, and wing his way back to earth and sit by your side, would he not entreat you to be prepared for eternity? Would he not, with streaming eyes, and with a heart beating with intense anxiety—would he not, in accents of melting tenderness, plead with you to love the Saviour? If you are already entertaining a hope of heaven, would he not say to you, "*Strive*, *strive* to enter in at the strait gate;" "Run with patience the race set before you,

looking unto Jesus," *looking unto* Jesus? If you are still in impenitence, would he not tell you of the thrills of joy that run through the shining ranks of the angels of God, when one sinner repents? If indeed he could utter one wish respecting this memoir, would it not be, that God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost might bless it to your conversion and final salvation?

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